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A FAIR APPARITION

AND OTHER RHYMES & SKETCHES



BY

CHARLES DYALL.

K 661.2 — 3/82

To Margaret
from her affectionate husband
the author
June 1878.

A FAIR APPARITION

AND

OTHER SKETCHES IN RHYME AND PROSE

By Charles Dyall



A FAIR APPARITION

OR

A Night with the Muses

AND

OTHER SKETCHES IN RHYME & PROSE

BY CHARLES DYALL

LIVERPOOL
GILBERT G. WALMSLEY, 50 LORD STREET
1877



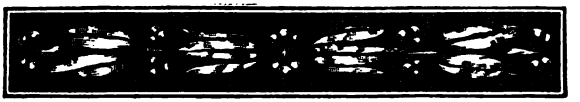
PREFACE.

THE modern application of the text, "Oh that mine adversary would write a book," seems to threaten dark and mysterious woes to any unfortunate scribbler who may have the temerity to print his effusions, and launch them on the wave of public notice. In publishing this volume, I am not much dismayed by the dread of the awful consequences which seem to be foreshadowed in the quotation above alluded to, because it is published to please my friends, from whom I may expect much tolerance, although the too candid friend is often more hurtful to one's self-esteem than the most cynical reviewer. In the event of my rhymes and sketches being considered worthy of public attention, should I find any "adversaries" in the shape of frank friends or cruel critics, I am induced to hope that (as my flights

have not been very lofty or ambitious) they will do their scalping as gently as the most ardent opponent of vivisection could desire.

To those whose names form the long list of subscribers to this volume, I beg to express my warmest acknowledgments, and the hope that if they do not think very highly of my performance, they will regard it as the effort of one who has had the desire, if not the ability, to please.

C. D.



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A FAIR APPARITION;

OR,

A NIGHT WITH THE MUSES.

I SAT one night
By the cheerful light
Of a winter's fire, that still shone bright,
Though the hour had sped
After which, it is said,
Respectable folks should be thinking of bed.
Our trusty dog "Rover"
Had long given over
His bark, which our maid calls a "regular rumpus,"
And was snug in his tub
Digesting his grub,
Coiled up for a nap, in a very small compass.
Our worthy Jemima, sedate and demure,
Had made all the inlets and outlets secure.
She always takes pains
With locks, bars, and chains,
To fasten us in like a party of smugglers,
Who dread a surprise
From the men of Excise,
Because, as she says, she's afraid of "them bugglars."

My much better half, who'd been trying her sight
With that capital novel, "The Woman in White,"
As she felt rather low,
At the story of woe,
And the rascally tricks of that villain "Fosco,"
(I remember she cried
Over poor Lady Glyde)
She said she'd repair to the regions above,
And sleep off her grief with our pledges of love.
Her retreat left me *solus*, my penholder nibbling,
A habit of mine, when intent upon scribbling,
And though 'twas high time to be in my first snooze,
I settled to writing, and courting the Muse.
I know 'tis imprudent,
In author, or student,
That very good copy-book text to despise,
Which gives us a clue
As to what we should do,
If we wish to be "healthy and wealthy and wise."
So I will not dispute
Or attempt to refute
This old-fashioned maxim, nor will I deride it,
As I know you'd retort,
I was quite "out of court"
If obliged to confess that I never had tried it.
Nor yet am I sure
That Mr. Tom Moore
Is correct when he says if we'd add to our years,

"The best of all ways
To lengthen our days
Is to steal a few hours from the night, my dears."
My mother, I know,
Would very soon show
Mr. Moore that his logic excited her laughter,
And would stoutly maintain,
If sound sleep you obtain,
One hour before twelve is worth two hours after.
But nevertheless,
I am bound to confess
I have paid little heed to her excellent warning,
For the somnolent god
Seldom causes a nod
Till I've heard the clock strike the small hours of the morning.

The cushion was soft in my easy chair,
My "cream-laid note" was white and fair,
My head was cool, for I'd had my hair
Shampooed that day, and cut with care
(Alas! I've now but little to spare),
I then look'd up to the gaslight, where
I watched a moth that fluttered there,
Till, dazzled with the brilliant glare,
My look became a vacant stare,
But not a thought could I ensnare.
I placed my head in thoughtful pose,
But vain were all my mental throes,

For not a line, in rhyme or prose,
Before my clouded vision rose,
As a cockney would say,
In his classical way,
It struck me as one of the "rummiest goes."
At length I thought I had a clue
To something rather good and new;
I seized my pen,
And swiftly then
Scribbled away for a line or two,
But when I came to look it through,
I found it was stuff, not a word would do.
I then invoked the "tuneful Nine"
To wake those latent powers of mine;
I dipped again
In the ink, and then
I thought I was going on swimmingly, when
I wrote two lines in my neatest hand
In classic style, sublime and grand—
"*Immortal Muse awake the lyre,*
And fill me with poetic fire."
But then my thought,
Becoming as nought,
Like "Sam Weller's" love letter, "pulled up short,"
There I stuck,
Like a cart in a ruck,
I couldn't get on, I was doomed to ill-luck.
'Twas plain that my muse, some other way strolling,
Didn't notice my "eye with a fine frenzy rolling."

It has well been observed by an eminent writer,
Though he puts it in terms more refined and politer,
When thought is not free, and the current keeps stopping,
You can't move an obstinate donkey with "whopping."*
It now being late,
And I found my dull pate
Either couldn't or wouldn't respond to my tapping,
And all my invoking was treated as joking,
I thought it was wiser to see about napping.
'Twas of no use to swear,
Or to kick at a chair,
Or indulge in a tear
At my whiskers or hair,
As stupid folks do, as no doubt you're aware,
In a transport of rage or a fit of despair.
My proceedings were more philosophic by far,
As my pipe was put out, I lit up a cigar,
And as I was not very lively or frisky,
I went to the sideboard and got out the whisky;
But though my ideas were involved in a muddle,
You mustn't suppose I was bent on a "fuddle,"
Or, because my mind's eye couldn't pierce without trouble
The thick mental fog,
I recourse had to grog,
To make my corporeal vision see double.
To calm agitation,
Or soothe irritation,

* Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating.—*Shakspeare.*

That is, if you're not of the teetotal 'suasion,
There's no better comfort for mind or for body
Than a rather stiff tumbler of good whisky "toddy;"
But if you're a muff
And can't take just enough
To make your eyes twinkle with laughter and merriment,
Without wanting more,
And crying, Encore
To each glass as you drain it, don't try the experiment.

The witching hour of twelve was striking
As again I sought my chair,
My whisky punch was to my liking,
And I smoked with placid air.
Soon my busy brain was planning
Never-to-be-written themes,
Or with retrospective scanning,
Called to mind forgotten dreams.
Thoughts of boyhood's years came floating
Upward, through the stream of time,
Schooldays, running, fighting, boating,
And the hopes of manhood's prime.
Rosy-tinted dreams disclosing
Bright rewards, and brighter fame,
Ere stern truth, the cheat exposing,
Altered quite "life's chequered game."
Calmly o'er my senses stealing,
As I sat and warmed my toes,
Came the somnorific feeling,
Warning me to seek repose.

But hark! what was that? a noise at the window,
Jemima was right, "them bugglars," by jingo,
Or was it old "Rover"
Who turned himself over,
And stretching his legs perhaps rattled his chain,
And getting no orders
For seizing marauders
Has settled himself to his snoozing again?
Yet I almost could swear
There was somebody there,
For though I was just dropping off in a nap
I certainly heard at the window a tap.
Hark! I heard it again,
And now it was plain
That whoever it was, or whate'er their intention,
To murder, or pillage,
Or fire the village,
The tapping was meant to attract my attention.
So I got up to find what had caused my alarm,
And was startled to hear,
A voice rich and clear,
That held me transfixed with its magical charm.
It put me in mind,
As it rose on the wind,
Of the soul-thrilling notes of the great Jenny Lind;
And sometimes it swelled like the rich mellow tone I
Have heard with such rapture from Madame Alboni.
But those I have named,
And others as famed,

As Patti, or Nillson, or Garcia, or Titiens,
Or the whole brilliant range of our vocal musicians,
They couldn't excel
The melodious swell
Of the voice that now held me entranced with its spell,
Which, after a prelude that didn't last long,
Surprised me still more with the following song :—

Mortal, cease your fruitless toil,
Waste not there your midnight oil,
Leave your home, and come with me,
Come with me,
And you shall see
The Muses hold their jubilee.

Ask you wherefore I delayed,
When you vainly sought my aid ?
Be not angry, don't upbraid,
Come away,
And I will say
How it was I truant played.

Soaring through the realms of night,
Safely hid from mortal sight,
I will bear you in my car,
Swiftly on
To Helicon,
Where my sister Muses are.

The gentle moon with silv'ry ray,
Beams to light us on our way,

Ere the dawn of coming day.
Let's away ;
Don't say nay,
Or keep me longer waiting, pray.

In excited surprise
I could scarcely surmise
What was meant by this message to visit the skies ;
There was no time for parley or useless debate,
And to let any young lady visitor wait
At that time of night,
Was a prōceeding quite
In direct opposition to what I thought right ;
So stealthily creeping along like a mouse,
For fear of disturbing the folks in the house,
I let myself out,
And looking about,
The moonlight disclosed to my wondering gaze
A figure that filled me with silent amaze.

A girlish form of beauty rare,
Unsupported in the air,
Stood before my raptured sight,
'Midst a haze of silver light.

Her tresses, parted from her brow,
Fell upon a neck of snow,
Wavy locks of shining gold,
Bright and dazzling to behold.

A gauzy robe of azure blue,
Decked with gems of lustrous hue,
Girded round her slender waist,
And draped her form with faultless taste.

Eyes ne'er beheld such matchless grace,
So fair a form, so sweet a face,
That smiled beneath a crown of flowers,
Like brilliant sunshine after showers.

With roguish laughter in her eyes,
At my ill-concealed surprise,
Her winning voice the silence broke,
And charmed my ear as thus she spoke :—

I fear I have caused you annoyance to-night
By taking "French leave," when you wanted to write,
My absence I know you'll excuse, when I say,
This has been with the Muses a great holiday.

I only just heard that you needed my aid,
By a telegram handed to me by my maid ;
I regret that you had not a theme for your pen,
But Muses, like mortals, must play, now and then.
You must know that Minerva to-night gives a *fête*,
In honour of what we've been doing of late,
And also that play may our vigour renew,
For a great deal of work that we yet have to do.
When old Winter comes in, with his frost and his fog,
And bright faces crowd round the blazing Yule log,

When authors must write and the Muses inspire,
A batch of new tales for the Christmas fire.
And now as I know you've an hour to spare,
I've come, Sir, to take you a trip through the air,
To the Helicon Mount, where the Muses to-night
Will revel and sing to their heart's delight.
In my patent electrical car we will ride,
So I pray you step in, take a seat by my side,
And gaily we'll soar by the light of the moon,
More swiftly than aeronauts in a balloon.

Before I had time to consider or say
That my wife might object to my flying away,
Or to urge that, to any one up in the street,
My conduct at least might appear indiscreet,
To see me eloping, conjugal vows scorning,
With such a fair damsel at one in the morning,—
I say that before I could make a demur,
Or could state what my wife from my flight might infer,
I found myself gaily careering along
With the Muse who had lured me away with her song.

At the playhouse I've seen on a pantomime night,
The sweet fairy queen, in a halo of light,
Descending to rescue the hero, from those
Whose base machinations had caused all his woes,
And bear him in safety away to the skies,
Or, at all events, safely as far as the flies,
Which I'm told, in a scenic illusion like this,
Is the technical term for the regions of bliss.

In my journey through space I could hardly repress,
The thought that 'twas I who had been in distress;
That my Muse was the fay, turning up just in time,
My bacon to save, in some grand pantomime.
I shouldn't have been the least morsel surprised
Had this notion of mine been at once realised,
By there and then finding some magical dell,
Where fairies were working some wonderful spell,
And being transformed with a twirl and a spin,
To that mythical fellow, a stage harlequin.
While that crazy old personage known as the clown,
Who never goes far without tumbling down;
And whose knavish tricks 'tis my mission to mar,
Turns heels over head, and exclaims "Here we are!"

But soon I was roused from such vague speculation
To take a survey of my strange situation,
As on we still sped, 'mid a silence profound,
Environed by grandeur, above and around,
The star-spangled sky, of ethereal blue,
Clouds bright and fantastic, of silvery hue,
The moon shining out from the great arch of night,
And lighting the way for our Heavenward flight.

The Excelsior motto I own I admire,
But still, I can't say I had any desire
Much longer to soar with my musical friend,
And thought it was time we began to descend;
So I glanced at the lady, as much as to say,

"How long at this altitude are we to stay?"
And if her arch look was not meant to deceive,
I fancied she wickedly laughed in her sleeve,
As she said, "Do not fear that I mean to play tricks,
By cruelly leaving you here in a fix;
Though *you* wouldn't be the first bard I have known,
Who had got in the clouds, and then couldn't get down.

"But hark, we're already approaching the earth.
On Helicon's Mount I can hear sounds of mirth,
Of shepherds, and nymphs, who disport in the groves,
And talk of the gods, and the tales of their loves.
And see, now, a thousand lights sparkle and twinkle,
The sheep-bells give out a melodious tinkle,
The revels I know are already begun,
And we must make haste to take part in the fun."
Instanter we stood on Bœotia's fair mountain,
Close by the side of the Hippocrene fountain,
Made, as they say, by a thirsty old horse,
Who stamped and created this fine watercourse.
"Then," said my Muse, with her countenance risible,
"I think while you stay you had best be invisible,
As fuller details of the *fête* you will glean,
By joining the throng while your form is unseen.
The Bœotian revels are very exclusive,
And some might consider your visit intrusive,
So here is a cloud that will keep you incog.
And hide you from view like an English fog.,

And now I must leave you to find your own way;
My sisters, no doubt, are surprised at my stay;
And when you're fatigued and would homeward repair,
You need say but the word, and you'll find yourself there."
With a graceful adieu she was off in a crack,
And then, I must say, I half wished myself back,
And stood to consider what course I should steer,
When sounds of the revelry, now coming near,
Enticed me, ne'er heeding the wrong or the right of it,
To see the immortal ones making a night of it.

Roaming then from Hippocrene,
Soon I came to pastures green,
Saw the lambs, with tinkling bells,
Frisking in the flow'ry dells;
Saw the happy nymphs, so fair,
Sporting on the sweet parterre;
Drank the perfume of the flowers
In the shade of sylvan bowers;
Watched the play of shepherd swains,
On the undulating plains;
Heard the twanging of the lute,
Dulcet notes of pipe and flute,
Tuned in lively strains to greet
Nimble steps of dancing feet;
Warbling song-birds in the trees
Vocal made the balmy breeze,
While the fountain's glittering spray
Sparkled in the moonlit ray.

Gushing streams and bright cascades,
Dancing through the verdant glades,
Buoyant bore the swelling sail,
Wafted by the gentle gale.
Fabled gods and valiant men,
Heroes of the sword and pen,
Grouped in marble pure and white,
Faced me in the soft moonlight.
'Neath an ancient shady tree
Apollo vies with Mercury;
Rival compeers, who aspire
To possess the magic lyre.
Here a sculptured Orpheus smiled,
Hemmed around by creatures wild,
Calming all their savage throats,
By the sweetness of his notes.
Now I stand in mute surprise,
Near wise Hesiod's sacred prize,
Record of his art divine,
Tribute to the tuneful Nine.
Marching on, with pipe and tabor,
Bringing in the spoils of labour,
Now there comes a joyous train,
Bearing fruits and golden grain.
Next approach a cherub band,
Tripping lightly hand in hand,
Each with chaplets meant to grace
Those victorious in the chase.
Sounds celestial float along,

As I roam the groves among,
Ravishing my willing ears
With the music of the spheres.
In the bosom of a wood,
Wise Minerva's temple stood,
Filled with all that sense delights,
Brilliant with a thousand lights.
Scenes of beauty, songs of gladness,
Here unite to banish sadness;
Pleasure reigns without alloy,
All is pure ecstatic joy.

But a veil I must draw,
Upon much that I saw
At the *fête* which passed off with such brilliant *éclat.*
I don't want to weary
My reader, for fear he
Should say, in the words of the famous Dundreary,
My figures and tropes, and my similes grand,
Are things that no fellow could well understand.
I have already told
How I sauntered and strolled,
In the classical ground of the Muses' stronghold,
Which region, I'm able
To state, is no fable,
And if your belief in this fact is unstable;
Or you think that my story an impudent farce is,
See Barthelemy's travels of young Anacharsis,

Or further proof needing
Just rub up your reading,
Some day when engaged in that useful proceeding—
Arranging your books in their case of mahogany,
And turn to page one of old Hesiod's "Theogony."
Read there his account
Of the Helicon Mount,
Where the Muses join hands round the violet fount;
Where nightly they skip,
And their pretty forms dip,
Then come out quite fresh for an aerial trip,
In a car made of clouds, to assist in his trade
Each dull-pated fellow who calls for their aid.
And it's quite a mistake
To suppose that they make
No account of the interests we have at stake;
For during my stay in their beautiful clime,
In the course of the revel they sent for Old Time,
(To make with his stories a pleasant half-hour pass).
Who presently came, with his scythe and his hour-glass,
And having been duly installed in a seat,
And pressed with much kindness to drink and to eat,
Ambrosia and nectar being then placed before him,
The ladies pressed round to entreat and implore him,
That he, "like a dear,"
Would recount how the year
Had been passed in the mortals' sublunary sphere.
And when with the Muses he'd chatted and laughed,
And a pretty stiff goblet of nectar had quaffed,

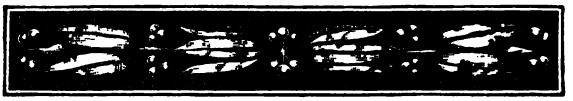
After smacking his lips at the luscious potation
He put down his glass, and began his oration :

"Ye lovely daughters of immortal Jove,
I fear the story I shall tell will prove,
Akin to those I've told in former years,
A tale to fill your pretty eyes with tears.
Engrossèd as you are in graceful arts,
You little know how mortals play their parts ;
How even those who form the world of fashion
Are not exempt from pride, deceit, and passion.
Despite your toil, in making men refined,
The arts are scorned by mortals base of mind,
Who grovel in some low debasing pleasure,
Ignoring gifts that Gods and heroes treasure.
The love of wealth dispels each generous thought,
The best and wisest teaching comes to naught ;
Men hug their foolish idols to the breast,
And sink degraded, when they might be blest ;
Might rules where Right should mortal actions sway
And brazen Vice, unchecked, pursues its way,
While Virtue walks, with weak and trembling feet,
And fools and knaves usurp the judgment seat ;
And oft, on many a green and fertile shore,
Internal strife invokes 'grim-visaged war,'
And mighty hosts, contending, thirst for blood,
That erst were joined in bonds of brotherhood.
But through the darkness of pervading gloom,
The clash of hostile arms and cannon's boom,
Some gleams of hope still shine, with fitful ray,

Struggling to chase the murky clouds away.
Good men still strive to elevate their race,
Exalting virtue in her rightful place;
Still hoping for the hour when wrong shall cease,
And all be harmony, and joy, and peace."

Minerva's stern face, I observed on perusal,
At this sad recital looked sterner than usual;
The ladies shed many a glistening tear,
While some sobbed, How shocking! and others, Oh dear!
Old Time, who perceived he was needed no longer,
Drank another stiff glass, rather sweeter and stronger,
And then took his flight,
And when out of sight,
Minerva called out to the ministring sprite,
"What ho, within there, more nectar, more light!
Come, ladies, don't cry,
Old Time we'll defy
Let us dance and be merry, and never say die;
To give way to weeping were folly indeed,
Come, music, strike up, let the revel proceed."
Reassured in this strain,
To a lively refrain
The nymphs were soon merrily dancing again;
Terpsichore, Goddess of motion and grace,
Directing the revels with laughter-lit face.
No fairies or elves that we see on the stage
Ever formed such a beautiful group, I'll engage.
All poets combined in one eloquent pen
Could but faintly describe the unique *mise en scène*

That ravished my sight
On that wonderful night,
And held me entranced in a dream of delight,
Till at last, with my senses and brain in a whirl,
I tried to join hands with a charming young girl,
But found with dismay I could not stir a peg,
With the grip of a vice I was held by the leg.
Human nature is weak,
And I gave a loud shriek,
Or a great yell of pain, more correctly to speak,
And then with my shout,
Came a stir and a rout.
The moon had gone in, and the lights had gone out,
And I was left helplessly groping about
In a gloom like to that which is always displayed,
In the last scene but one of the Harlequinade.
And now see me groaning,
My sad fate bemoaning,
In anguish and terror my rashness atoning,
Unfortunate wretch that I am, then I cried,
Oh, would I were safe by my own fireside.
The spell was now broken, and rubbing my eyes,
To my great satisfaction and no less surprise,
I soon found relief from my pain and despair;—
I had never been out of my cosy arm-chair.
With a cold clammy moisture my forehead was damp,
The pain in my leg had been caused by the cramp.
So, with these adventures still filling my head,
I turned all the gas off, and crept up to bed."



INCOMPATIBILITY;

OR,

A PAGE OF CURRENT HISTORY.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

SIR THOMAS OLDWAYS, a gentleman of the old school.
MISS SOPHRONIA, his sister, a lady of advanced opinions.
THEOPHILUS JONES, a page, with a soul above buttons.
BETSEY BLANK, an uninformed "young person."

SCENE.

Breakfast Room in the mansion of Sir Thomas Oldways. Folding doors at back, through which is seen part of the garden. Handsome furniture; at right a table with books, writing-desk, etc; on left a piano; flowers in vases in various parts of the room.

Betsey Blank discovered completing arrangements of the room.

Betsey. There now, I wonder if they will be pleased with me this morning. Miss Fronia and Thoflus are always telling me to show good taste; I always thought taste was something to eat, but Thoflus says it means "orderly arrangement," and they find fault if the coffee-pot and sugar-basin are too close together. Heigh ho! how

I should like to be clever like Thoflus, and how beautiful he does talk; and I am so stupid I don't understand half he says. He gets up in the morning to learn *mathew-matics*, and when I asked him what that was for, he said he wanted to know the "*difference of a calcularius.*" I wonder what that is. How the dear little birds are singing this morning; *they* can't read, but they seem very merry, so I'll sing a little song too.

Song.

I'm a stupid little fool,
I never went to school,
And no one ever thought of teaching me
I never can make out
What books are all about,
I cannot even say my A B C.

I cannot write my name,
(I don't know who's to blame),
If a pothook or a stroke I try to make,
I drop an inky tear
On the page so white and clear
From the horrid pen which makes my fingers ache.

At figures I'm as bad,
It is really very sad,
But to count upon my fingers I've begun;
I have learned to know my age,
And to reckon up my wage,
And I'm trying to look after Number One.

But I can rub and scrub,
And at the washing tub
I can do as well as Susan, Jane, or Ann;
At work I know quite well
I can always take a spell;
So I'll make myself as happy as I can.

[*Enter Theophilus carrying book under arm, and basket of flowers.*]

Theo. Ah! my precious Betsey, singing so early, and your work nearly completed! why, you must have been up with the lark.

Betsey. Lor', Mr. Thoflus, how you do talk! I wasn't up to no lark, I was only singing to myself.

Theo. And you sing like a nightingale. When I hear your mellifluous warbling, it fills my soul with ecstasy. What a rival you would have been to Alboni or Grisi!

Betsey. I am sure, sir, I'm not all boney, and as to being greasy, this dress was clean on this morning.

Theo. Ah, Betsey! your unsophisticated nature renders you unconscious that your simple costume adorns the fair proportions of a Venus, and adds new charms to a face radiant with the beaming brightness of Aurora.

Betsey (putting apron to her eyes). I thought just now you praised my voice; I know I sing rather loud, but I didn't think you would call me a roarer.

Theo. Ah, Betsey! and do I see thee thus "like Niobe, all tears!" You know how devotedly I love you; let us

be united and fly far from this scene of degrading drudgery. What say's my love?

Betsey (*looking up*). Have you cleaned the master's boots?

Theo. O cruel Betsey! why will you remind me of the galling chain that clogs my life, and checks the soaring of my ambitious soul.

Cook (*calling off*). Thoflus! Where is that young wagabone, I wonder?

Betsey. There's the cook a-calling. She told me this morning if you didn't get the knives cleaned in time for lunch, she'd wring your precious neck.

Theo. O cruel fate! If my simple words are of no avail, I will invoke the muses' aid.

Duet.—THEOPHILUS AND BETSEY.

Theo. O lovely Betsey, fly with me,
And we'll no longer slaveys be.

Betsey. Oh, no! Oh, no! I'd rather stay
To work and get four meals a day.

Together.

Theo. Let's haste away.
Betsey. I'd rather stay.
Theo. To roam where verdant fields are gay.
Betsey. To work and have four meals a day.

Theo. We'll seek some sweet sequestered vale,
And whisper love's bewitching tale.

Betsey. I fear some inward twitching here
Would call for bread, and beef, and beer.

Together. Let's haste away, etc.

Theo. Our home shall be some blissful bower,
Enshrined with every fragrant flower.

Betsey. Where I should live in constant dread
The baker would not bring the bread.

Together. Let's haste away, etc.

Theo. We'll roam and watch the playful lambs
All frisking with their pretty dams.

Betsey. I'd rather have my Sunday out,
My reg'lar meals and pint of stout.

Together. Let's haste away, etc.

Theo. Our cot should be a bower of bliss.
Can you refuse such joy as this?

Betsey. To stay with master be content,
He feeds us well, and pays the rent.

Together. Let's haste away, etc.

Cook (*calling off*). Now, Betsey, are you coming to do any work to-day?

Betsey. Coming, coming, mum. [*Runs off left.*

Theo. And I must to my weary work again,
To herd with vulgar menials
My soul's desire lacking;
To brush the dust from dirty boots,
And polish them with blacking. [*Exit.*

[*Enter Miss Sophronia and Sir Thomas.*]

Sir T. My dear Sophronia, your ideas are in advance of the times; they may do very well fifty years hence.

Soph. And you, my dear brother, are very much behind the times. We live in an age of progress and invention. How would you like now to travel in a stuffy stage-coach holding four inside, or be buried in a heap of luggage as an outside passenger, with the probability of getting your dear old neck broken at a sharp turn in the road?

Sir T. Infinitely better than being toppled over an embankment by the finest express train that ever was invented. We are living altogether at too rapid a pace; what with mail steamers, express trains, and electric telegraphs, there is not actually time to live. Give me the good old times when things were not done in such a confounded hurry.

Soph. My dear brother, *these* are the good old times; the world is older than it ever was. We are now enjoying the fruit of the labours of these nice old poets, philosophers, and inventors, who were good enough to work, centuries ago, for the benefit of an ungrateful posterity, of which I'm afraid, brother, you are a shocking example.

Sir T. Why, that just proves my case. In the old times men had leisure to achieve something. Where will you now find a Newton, a Herschell, a Shakspeare, a Milton, or a Scott? This is an age of mediocrity.

Soph. But we have some great poets and philosophers even now.

Sir T. Yes, poets who write verses that neither they nor any one else can understand; and philosophers who tell us we are a conglomeration of molecules, and that our original progenitors wore tails.

Soph. In this age of enlightenment education is more diffused. I am confident that we have amongst us many "mute inglorious Miltons," and "Cromwells guiltless of their country's blood."

Sir T. That's the very evil I complain of. Now that these new-fangled school-boards are starting up all over the country, Jack will be as good as his master. What can one say to a servant who caps one's Latin quotation, or who has Hume and all the other historians at his finger's ends? Why, it was only the other day I heard that boy Theophilus lecturing my cook, who has been in the family more than thirty years, for not aspirating her h's.

Soph. Theophilus was a favourite pupil at our district board school, and I have engaged him in order that his refined and educated mind may tone down, in some measure, the coarse rudeness of the other servants, and I have the fullest confidence in the result.

Sir T. And I have taken Betsey Blank into my ser-

vice. She seems to have slipped through the meshes of the School Board net, for she can neither read nor write, and I'll warrant she'll prove a most faithful and devoted servant—one who knows her place, and who has no ambition beyond the sphere of duty and obedience; while your learned page will be too clever to work, and will be tortured with the pangs of ungratified ambition.

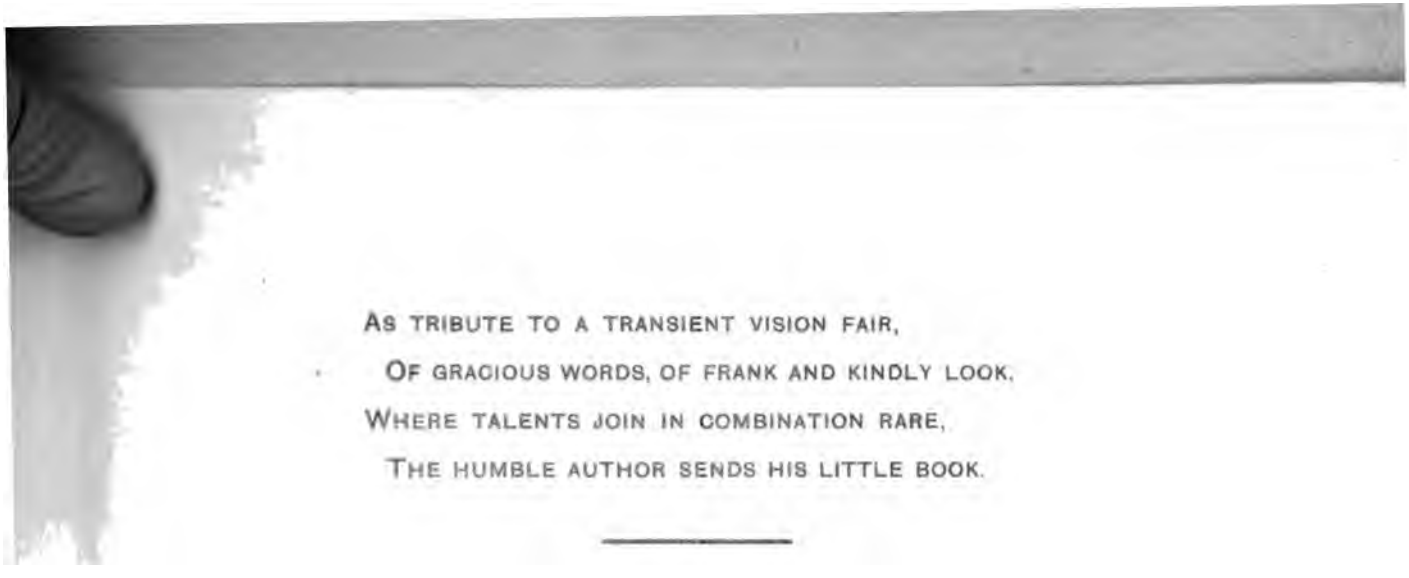
Soph. We are now in a state of transition. When education becomes universal we shall have achieved the perfection of civilisation; we are now in a half-barbarous condition. If the Kinder Garten system had been in operation a hundred years ago, we might now have arrived at the millennium.

Sir T. The Kinder Garten! why, what new-fangled idea is that?

Soph. Oh, a most wonderful system of teaching introduced from Germany. Education in concentrated essence. Theophilus is quite familiar with it. I'll call him in [rings bell], and you shall see a sample of the system.

[*Enter Theo.*] Theophilus, bring in your prize box of Kinder Garten gifts; I want to show Sir Thomas what a delightful system it is; and you may bring Betsey Blank in to hear the lesson; it may help to enlighten the poor child. [*Exit Theo.*

Yes, my dear brother, the world is as yet in its infancy. The time will come when steam and electricity will be regarded as the rude and clumsy expedients of an unenlightened age.



As tribute to a transient vision fair,
Of gracious words, of frank and kindly look,
Where talents join in combination rare,
The humble author sends his little book.

May envy's shafts her exaltation miss,
Nor dull her golden sunshine with alloy;
May fate be constant in her dower of bliss,
The future one long dream of wedded joy.

C. D.

[*Enter Betsey, and Theo. with box, who hands it to Miss S.*]

Soph. Now, Betsey, you stand here, child, and hold this box; and you, Theophilus, sit down and play one of the little Kinder Garten tunes, while I give Sir Thomas a lesson.

Note.—The box must contain a ball, a cube, a cone, and a white rod, all of good size; Miss S. taking them out as required during the song. All characters to join in the chorus.

Song—MISS SOPHRONIA.

"THE KINDER GARTEN SCHOOL."

1. Now, pupils, be particular,
This rod is perpendicular;
Which teaches you an upright course
In life should be your rule.
Thus science and morality,
Imparted in duality,
Make model men and women
At the Kinder Garten school.

Chorus (*all characters*).

Thus Science and Morality,
Imparted in duality,
Make model men and women
At the Kinder Garten school.

2. And now this little rod of mine
I place in horizontal line,
By which you may the lesson learn
"'Tis wise to live by rule."

For if you take to crooked ways,
Who knows how you may end your days?
So don't forget this precept
Of the Kinder Garten school.
Chorus.—Thus science, etc.

3. Now this is what is called a cone;
You see how well it stands alone,
'Tis sometimes used improperly
To indicate a fool.
But from it we this lesson take—
A firm foundation always make;
Which is a leading maxim in
The Kinder Garten school.
Chorus.—Thus science, etc.

4. And now a cube I show to you;
Its angles, sides, and edges true,
Which teaches us equality
By scientific rule.
If life be rough, and ills betide,
We'll look upon the other side,
And square our lives like pupils of
The Kinder Garten School.
Chorus.—Thus Science, etc.

5. Another object we have here,
'Tis what is called a ball or sphere;
You see them at your uncle's shop
In triplets as a rule.



But useful lessons still are rife:
Be wise in every walk of life,
As o'er the globe you travel from
The Kinder Garten School.
Chorus.—Thus science, etc.

[*Exit Betsey with box.*

Soph. Well, Sir Thomas, what do you think of our concentrated essence of education?

Sir T. Well, I daresay it's all very clever; a sort of Liebig's extract of intellectual meat will no doubt be necessary, or life will not be long enough to digest all the learned pabulum which is being forced down people's throats.

Soph. I am afraid you are incorrigible. You are becoming quite a cynic. Well, I must leave you now, for I am going into the garden to pursue my delightful studies in botany.

Sir T. Well, my learned sister, *au revoir.* I shall join you presently to ascertain the properties of a certain weed grown in India, and most likely, like many of the new-fangled theories of the time, it will end in smoke.

Now, Theophilus, you run to the post-office and see if there are any letters for me this morning.

[*Exit Theophilus.*

Letters indeed! Letters are the plague of my life, and yet people are always talking of the blessing of the penny post; for my part, I think it an unmitigated nuisance. When a letter cost a shilling it was worth reading, and

your correspondent had something interesting to communicate, but now people write on the most trumpery occasions, and one is not only expected to read the rubbish, but to send immediate replies.

[*Enter Theo.*] No letters this morning, Sir Thomas.

Sir T. I am delighted to hear it; now I shall have a quiet morning in the garden, and for one day feel that I have time to live.

Theo. I am sorry, sir, to trouble you, knowing your aversion to epistolary communications; but I must beg your perusal of this from your humble servant. [*Presents letter.*

Sir T. What on earth do you want to be making "epistolary communications" to me for? Have you lost the use of your tongue, sir? you know I hate letters.

Theo. I think you will find, sir, that this communication requires to be in legal form.

Sir T. Well, let me see it. [*Takes letter.*] I hope your scribbling propensities won't get you into trouble. Beware of black and white, my boy; what a man says may be forgotten and forgiven, but a man's handwriting often appears in judgment against him. [*Reads letter.*

"Sir—I regret to inform you that a necessity has arisen for the severance of the relations in which we have stood to each other for some time past. It is not that you have failed to treat me with the consideration due to my position, but, there exists considerable incompatibility of temperament between myself and the other officers of your household. In fact, our antecedents, ideas, and

tastes are so dissimilar that further association has become mutually impossible; I must request, therefore, that you will be good enough to make such arrangements as you may deem fit, in order that my engagement may be terminated as soon as possible.—I have the honour to be, Sir, your obedient servant, THEOPHILUS JONES.

Sir T. [*aside*]. Incompatibility of temperament! I wonder he doesn't assure me of his distinguished consideration. Well, sir, so you want to leave my service?

Theo. Such, sir, is my desire.

Sir T. And pray, sir, if I may not be considered as prying into your affairs, what do you mean by incompatibility of temperament? Have you been quarrelling with the other servants?

Theo. Pardon me, Sir Thomas; as you are aware, a gentleman never quarrels with his inferiors; there is, however, a degree of self-respect which renders association with vulgar and uneducated persons unendurable.

Sir T. But what have you to complain of? These vulgar and uneducated persons you allude to have been in my service for many years, and I have found them most industrious and trustworthy.

Theo. Long familiarity reconciles us to many incongruities, Sir Thomas. Old association may have enabled you to tolerate them; but the refined atmosphere of the School Board school, in which I have been educated, makes intimate association with such persons intolerable.

Sir T. [*aside*]. Confound the fellow! This comes of edu-

cating the masses; instead of kicking him for an impertinent puppy, I find myself holding a discussion with him, and shall very likely be worsted in the encounter.

Well, but you have not told me your grounds of complaint; what do they do to you?

Theo. I am unwilling to trouble you with details, but as you desire it, I will merely mention a few which occur to me at this moment. I am frequently called a "kid" or a "monkey." Now, as I disagree with Darwin's theory, I naturally object to the term "monkey." Then at other times I am called "Buttons," a coarse and insulting allusion to the costume which the conventionality of society considers necessary for persons in my position. Then, sir, practical joking is not unfrequently indulged in; the uneducated have no other idea of wit. Consider, sir, how annoying it must be, when I am about retiring to rest, to find that the housemaid has folded the sheets into what is termed an "apple pie" bed, or to be aroused from one's sleep in the morning by what the cook calls a bit of "cold pig."

Sir T. What on earth is "cold pig?"

Theo. It is simply, sir, a flannel, dipped in cold water, and placed suddenly on the face, so that the water trickles down the neck in a most uncomfortable manner.

Sir T. Decidedly unpleasant. But is this all you have to complain of?

Theo. By no means, Sir Thomas; I find that the language made use of by the servants generally is calculated to vitiate one's taste, and corrupt the purity of the

English tongue, which *I* have been taught to speak and write with propriety. Indeed, sir, you would hardly recognise some of their words as English. Beer they call "swipes" or "swankey;" bread is "tommy" or "chuck;" potatoes are "murphies" or "spuds;" pudding is "duff;" and what would you think, Sir Thomas?—yesterday I asked the cook what we were to have for dinner, and she told me a "mountain-pecker."

Sir T. A what?

Theo. A mountain-pecker, Sir Thomas.

Sir T. Why, what on earth is that?

Theo. You may well ask, Sir; why, I afterwards discovered it to be what polite people would know as a sheep's head.

Sir T. Dear me, you astonish me. I can scarcely wonder at your dissatisfaction.

Theo. And then, Sir Thomas, the way in which the Queen's English is murdered is dreadful and distressing. Imagine the cook calling for "hinguns," "taters," and "wegetables;" and the other day she called to the footman while we were at dinner, "Enery, hopen the door about a hinch, and let us 'ave a little more hair."

Sir T. Certainly to your refined taste and sensitive ear this must have been most distressing; her mode of aspirating must have been exasperating. But why don't you try to cultivate their minds? to bring them up to your standard?

Theo. I have tried, Sir Thomas, but the result was not encouraging. I asked the footman to read the works of Mill, Carlyle, Browning, and Tennyson.

Sir T. Well, he's a sharp fellow; I suppose you made some impression upon him.

Theo. On the contrary, sir, he told me he only cared for the "mills" in *Bell's Life*, and as to Carlyle, Browning, and Tennyson, he would wait till they were translated into English,

Sir T. Ah, ah, ah! he meant that for a piece of wit. Well, how about the housemaids and the cook?

Theo. The housemaids read nothing but the breaches of promise, and the cook cares only for the harrowing details of what she calls a good murder.

Enter Miss SOPHRONIA and BETSEY, *who is crying.*

Miss S. Goodness, child, don't make such a noise; what is the matter, brother? here is Betsey crying her eyes out, and says Theophilus has given us notice. Is this true?

Sir T. Quite true. Just as I predicted: there is the fruit of your boasted scheme for universal education. Theophilus finds his position with my worthy and trusty domestics intolerable, and is going into the world to starve by his brains, instead of earning a comfortable living with his hands. But what is the matter with you, girl; what are you crying for?

Betsey. Oh, if you please, sir, I want to leave too. Thoflus wants to make me as clever as himself.

Miss S. Ah, ah, ah! You see how it is, brother; the little god Cupid has been at work.

Sir T. I thought, sir, you could not endure the association of uneducated persons.

Theo. Betsey, Sir Thomas, is the exception that proves the rule.

Sir T. Well, well, I see I must come to the rescue here, or you will be making a couple of fools of yourselves. I like you both, and I have an old-fashioned weakness for keeping my people about me a long time; so I'll tell you what I'll do, Theophilus,—you shall be my amanuensis, read those confounded letters, and write the answers; in short, be my secretary. Will that suit you?

Theo. Oh, Sir Thomas! you are too good. My devotion shall show my gratitude. I long to distinguish myself, to hand my name down to an admiring posterity, that on the scroll of fame they may read that *I*, Theophilus Jones, had a soul above buttons.

THE NABOB AND THE NEPHEW;

OR,

FROLIC AND FORTUNE.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

COLONEL CURRIE, of H.M.I.S., just returned from India.
HARRY HOPEFUL, his nephew. Afterwards,
Mrs. CODDLE, the family nurse; and
Dr. COLCHICUM, the family physician.
SALLY, a confidential servant.

SCENE.

Dining-room in Mrs. Hopeful's house.

Enter COL. CURRIE.

Col. C. Well, here I am again once more in old England, after twenty years' absence in India in the service of my country, and having amassed wealth, and ruined my liver, I shall probably die off in a few years, and leave some spendthrift to make ducks and drakes of my hard-earned fortune.

Enter SALLY.

Sally. Good morning, sir; I hope you slept well. I am sorry my lady is not at home; your unexpected arrival last night put us all in a flutter.

Col. C. Never mind, my pretty one; after my long journey I slept as soundly as a drunken sentry. I ought to have telegraphed my arrival to my sister, but I thought to give her a pleasant surprise. When do you say your mistress will return?

Sally. Not for three days at least, sir.

Col. C. Very good. I think you said your young master, my nephew, was at home; what sort of a young gentleman is he?

Sally. Oh! he's very handsome, sir.

Col. C. Ah! I see, just like your sex, your first thought is for a handsome exterior. Is he anything like me, eh?

Sally. Not much, sir. I think he would be like you if—

Col. C. If what?

Sally. If you had a better complexion, sir.

Col. C. That I should live to hear any one say I had a bad complexion! Well, never mind his personal appearance; I shall be able to judge of that when I see him. what kind of disposition has he, eh?

Sally. Oh! he's a very nice young gentleman, so kind and generous.

Col. C. How do you know he is generous?

Sally. Because he always makes me a present on my birthday.

Col. C. Birthday! Oh you still have birthdays in England, eh? I thought those old-fashioned customs had died out; everything else seems changed. Well, I suppose I must keep up the family reputation, so here is something for your next birthday [*gives money*]; and now, while I go to write a letter to my sister, you go and inform my nephew of my arrival. Don't tell him that I have made any inquiries concerning him; I want to see and judge for myself, and if I find him a boy after my own heart, full of pluck and spirit, with a dish of fun and frolic in his nature, and a kindly disposition withal, he shall inherit my fortune.

Sally. Oh I am sure you will like him, sir.

Col. C. Well, we shall see. Now mind, when I see him, I shall pretend to have the gout, and I shall then see whether he is kind and considerate to an afflicted and infirm old uncle. [*Exit.*

Sally. Oh dear! oh dear! whatever shall I do! how unlucky that my lady's not at home. I have to do my best to entertain the Colonel, and to see that Master Harry does not get himself into disgrace. If the Colonel finds out what a mischievous boy he is he will not leave him his fortune; and if Master Harry finds out that any trick is being played on him, he will be worse than ever. Was ever poor girl placed in such a dilemma?

Enter HARRY (*slyly, slapping Sally on the back*).

Harry. Hallo, "Sally-come-up," how are you to-morrow?

Sally. O Master Harry, how you did startle me.

Harry. Is breakfast almost ready? I feel an inward monitor calling out for eggs, toast, and coffee.

Sally. Hush, Master Harry, you must not be so boisterous. I have news for you: your uncle from India arrived last night quite unexpectedly.

Harry. What, old Curry Powder?

Sally. No; your uncle, Colonel Currie. You'll now have to be on your best behaviour, and be careful to treat him with proper respect.

Harry. Has he brought any elephants with him?

Sally. No; but he brought a lot of trunks.

Harry. Well, the idea of any uncle coming from India and not bringing an elephant with him!—I feel quite disappointed.

Sally. And I'm as much put out as if he had brought an elephant with him. I do so wish your mamma was at home; I don't know what I shall order for his dinner.

Harry. Oh, he'll be all right; you must get five pounds of cayenne pepper, six dozen jars of Captain White's Oriental pickle, plenty of Nabob sauce, and he'll be as happy as a prince.

Sally. Well, we shall have to do the best we can, but, above all, you must be very careful of your behaviour. Your uncle is very rich, and if he is pleased with you, most likely will leave you all his money, so do be careful, and don't play any of your tricks on him, for I really tremble when I think of the many pranks you have played.

Harry. All right, "Sally in our alley," I'll be as serious

as old Snuffle, my tutor, though I have a grudge against him already for not bringing me an elephant. If he had brought me a little tiger it would have been something; I think I must play him a trick out of revenge.

Sally. Oh, now don't, Master Harry.

Harry. Oh, but I must.

Sally. Oh dear, what shall I do? he'll be getting into some mischief as sure as fate. I think I had better tell him about his uncle's pretended gout. If you can keep a secret, Master Harry, I will tell you one. Your uncle is very anxious to know your disposition and to try your affection. He will be here presently, walking as though he had the gout, so you will have to humour him and be very kind and attentive, or he may leave all his money to somebody else.

Harry. Oh! old Curry Powder is up to larks? Well, I promise to be very attentive; I'll nurse him and doctor him too. We'll see who gets the best of it—the Nabob or the Nephew.

Sally. Well, I must go now and see to the breakfast. What a flurry I am in, to be sure; whatever will be the end of it, goodness only knows. [*Exit.*

Enter Col. CURRIE.

Col. C. Well, young hopeful, I suppose you are my nephew; do you know who I am?

Harry. Yes, sir; you are my uncle, Colonel Currie, [*aside*] *alias* old Curry Powder.

Col. C. You see I am lame this morning; I have a sharp twinge of the gout. Oh, it puts me in torture.

Harry. I am sure it must be very painful.

Col. C. Oh! I am in agony.

Harry [*aside*]. (Oh, the old hypocrite!) I am sorry mamma is not at home; but I'll do my best to get you well. I'll be both doctor and nurse to you. [*Aside*] Won't I give him physic.

Col. C. That's a good kind boy; your sympathy does you credit.

Harry. Take this chair, sir, and put your foot on this one, and we'll soon make you better. I'll fetch our old nurse, Mrs. Coddle, and she'll tie it up for you.

Col. C. Ay, I want a little nursing; my toe is quite red and inflamed.

Harry. I say, uncle, do you ever have the gout in your nose?

Col. C. In my nose? no, boy. Why?

Harry. Because that seems to show similar symptoms.

Col. C. Ah, ah, ah. Oh, you young dog, but the gout is no joke, I can tell you.

Harry. Not in your case, I'm sure, uncle; but you do seem to suffer so that I'll run for Mrs. Coddle at once.

[*Exit.*]

Col. C. Egad, there's a merry twinkle about that boy's eye that tells me he is not half so demure as he appears to be. Well, I shall be all the better pleased if it turns out that he is a lad of spirit. Ah! I can remember well, I am afraid to think how many years ago, what a very imp of

mischief I was myself—how I used to turn the house "topsy-turvy," how I worried the cats and the poultry, sometimes being brought home half drowned, through getting out of my depth when learning to swim, at other times getting a bruised nose or a black eye, the fruits of a too impetuous rashness in vindicating my honour with boys twice my own size. Ah! I have a vivid recollection of the thrashing I had for taking my father's best horse out of the stable, and bringing him home dead lame after a two-hours' scamper across country. But if a boy's heart is right he's none the worse for being a bit of a Turk. If all our boys were milk-sops, our armies and our navies would never have achieved half the brilliant victories which make them now their country's pride and boast. But, egad, I had forgotten I have the gout; here's the old woman.

Enter HARRY (*disguised as Mrs. Coddle, who is very deaf*).

Col. C. Well, old lady, good morning; have you come to cure my gout?

Mrs. C. Eh?

Col. C. Can you cure the gout?

Mrs. C. Oh no, I never go out.

Col. C. You must have been in the family a long time; are you very old?

Mrs. C. No thankee, I'm not cold.

Col. C. Well, for your age, you seem very frisky.

Mrs. C. No, I never drink whisky.

Col. C. Well, if you are to tie up my foot, why don't you begin?

Mrs. C. Yes, I don't mind having a little drop of gin; haven't you got any? I always keep a little drop in my pocket. (*Takes out bottle from pocket.*) I take it for the screwmatics; have a drop, sir, capital thing for the gout. Do you feel very bad?

Col. C. Very.

Mrs. C. Well, you don't look it; young Master Harry told me you were dreadful ill.

Col. C. Indeed!

Mrs. C. Ah! a good kind boy that nephew of yours, very fond of me, gives me the best of everything he has. You ought to be very proud of such a nephew. Well, if this foot is to be tied up, I had better do it. [*Ties up foot.*]

Col. C. This dissimulation of mine is becoming rather a bore. I suppose I shall have the old family doctor here presently; I shall hardly be able to impose on him.

Enter SALLY (*with Daily Paper, and stands astonished at seeing Mrs. C.*)

Sally. I have brought you the paper, sir; I thought you would like to see it while breakfast is getting ready.

Col. C. Thank you; you see I am getting cured of the gout. Mrs. Coddle seems a capital nurse.

Sally. Mrs. Who, sir?

Col. C. Mrs. Coddle.

Sally [*confused*]. Oh yes, sir, been in the family many years, sir. [*Aside*] Never heard of her before in my life. Oh what a flurry I do feel; some trick of Master Harry's, I'm sure.

Mrs. C. There now, I think you'll do till the doctor comes; that's his knock, I must go and let him in. [*Exit.*

Col. C. Well, my nephew seems a very kind-hearted boy; seeing that I was ill, he has been most kind and attentive.

Sally. Yes, sir, he's very good, but——

Col. C. But what, girl—not quite such a saint as he looks, eh?

Sally. Well, boys will be boys, sir, and at times he is fond of a little mischief.

Col. C. Well, he's none the worse for that; I like a boy to have a little spirit. Well, let me see, what did you say your name was?

Sally. Sarah, sir, but Master Harry will call me Sally.

Col. C. Ah! shows he has a poetical turn; he remembers the old song [*Col. Currie sings*] "Of all the girls that are so smart, there's none so smart as Sally."

Sally. Oh, sir, you flatter me. [*Aside*] What a nice old gentleman he is. [*Exit.*

Col. C. Not by any means a bad-looking girl, and if I had been forty years younger I might have been tempted to add [*sings*] "For she's the darling of my heart, and she lives in our alley."

Enter HARRY (*disguised as Dr. Colchicum*).

Dr. C. Good morning, Colonel! your nephew told me you were very ill; as you were singing, I suppose the thought of the doctor scared the gout away.

Col. C. The gout, doctor, is, I think, an infliction

imposed by Providence to try one's patience and philosophy, and I have always made it a rule to be cheerful under misfortune.

Dr. C. And you seem to succeed. Will you let me feel your pulse? [*Takes out watch.*] Ah, I see how it is—a glass too much of that choice old port; eh, Colonel?

Col. C. No, doctor, it is constitutional; it has been the distinguished honour of the Curries to have the gout in the family for generations.

Dr. C. Ah, the gout is an aristocratic complaint; low people have rheumatism.

Col. C. May I ask you to have a glass of wine?

Dr. C. Not any, thank you.

Col. C. Oh, but I must insist; it shall never be said that the Curries were wanting in hospitality. [*Rings.*

Enter SARAH.

Col. C. Sarah, bring some sherry. The doctor will take a glass of wine and drink to our better acquaintance.

Sarah. The doctor! what a funny old man! Oh dear! oh, dear! I shall go crazy. [*Exit, looking at the doctor and holding up her hands.*

Dr. C. Now, Colonel, I'll tell you what you must do: you must have a dozen leeches on your toe; have your head shaved to keep down the inflammation, a blister behind each ear, and then I think you'll be all right.

Col. C. Not if I know it. Well, doctor, I will be candid with you. I have no gout; it was merely a little artifice of mine to try the disposition of my nephew.

Dr. C. Your nephew! well, I have known him ever since he was born, and if you have played any trick upon him I'll warrant he'll prove a match for you; and since you have no gout, I am no doctor.

Col. C. No doctor! Who the deuce are you then?

Enter SARAH (*with wine*).

Dr. C. [*taking off coat, wig, and whiskers*]. Why, none other than your ever obedient and affectionate nephew.

Col. C. O you young rascal!

Sally [*rushing forward*]. Oh, don't be angry! sir, it's only one of his little tricks.

Col. C. Little tricks! why I never met with such an impudent monkey in my life. That I should be roasted for the best part of my life in India, and come home to be roasted by my nephew!

Sally. Oh! pray forgive him, sir, he doesn't mean any harm.

Col. C. Forgive him! egad, I'm delighted with him; come to my arms, you young dog. Egad, you are just the boy I was myself, at your age. You shall be my heir, and I shall die with the comfortable assurance of leaving my wealth to one who will sustain the reputation of his family.

CURTAIN.

HIS BETTER HALF.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Mr. ADOLPHUS CROWFOOT, a retired poulterer.
Mrs. PENELOPE CROWFOOT, his better half.

SCENE.

Breakfast-room in Crowfoot House.

Enter Mr. and Mrs. CROWFOOT.

Mrs. C. My dear Adolphus, I really wonder that you trouble me with such petty details; you know that my mind is constantly at work devising schemes for the reconstruction of our whole social fabric, and yet you worry me about the absence of a paltry shirt-button.

Mr. C. With all due respect for the social fabric, my dear, I am bound to say that a shirt without buttons is a delusion and a snare, and is calculated to rile the temper of a saint. Whenever I find a button gone, it always sticks in my gizzard.

Mrs. C. Gizzard, Adolphus! why will you not endeavour to be more refined in your expressions? If your

experience in business *has* made you familiar with the anatomy of the feathered tribe, that is no reason for always using technical terms. Now that you have retired from trade, you must try to adapt yourself to the language of polite society.

Mr. C. I always likes to call things by their proper names, and to speak well of the bridge as carries me safe over. Why, the gizzard is part of the giblets, and many a bright pound have I made by selling 'em out at a shilling a lot.

Mrs. C. But, my dear, society demands that you should forget these things; now that you are rich, there is no need to remind people that you once sold geese and turkeys. Why, only the other evening at dinner, when you were helping Mrs. Dashington to some chicken, I was inexpressibly shocked to hear you telling her of the beauties you used to retail at four shillings the couple, and loud enough, too, for all the table to hear.

Mr. C. Well, I must say something to make myself agreeable, and why shouldn't I talk on a subject that I understand? It's all very well talking about poetry and literatoor for people as understand it (though my opinion is one half of 'em doesn't know what they're driving at); but when I tells 'em of the quantity of game and poultry as I've had in my shop, I can knock 'em all into a cocked hat.

Mrs. C. Now that you are my husband, Adolphus, your ideas must be elevated to fit you for the position we seek to occupy in society. Vulgar associations must be

ignored, and you must adapt yourself to a more refined atmosphere.

Mr. C. The refined atmosphere, as you call it, is all very well, I daresay, when you gets used to it; but I wish the people we meet wouldn't be quite so stiff and starchy like. Why, sometimes when I make a sensible remark, some of 'em seems quite taken aback, as if they didn't understand English; why, they remind me of a lot of tailor's dummies, models for the exhibition of wearing apparel.

Mrs. C. No doubt there may be some truth in what you say. But you must be a quiet observer, and be silent for a time. Many a man has gained a reputation for wisdom simply by keeping his mouth shut. You were dreadfully fidgetty at the concert last night, and I was horrified to hear you say to that enthusiastic musician, Mr. Piccoli, that "you wished they'd cut it short."

Mr. C. And I'll be bound a good many more wished so too, only they was too fashionable to say so. What they calls classical music may be all very clever, but all that running up to the top, and rattlin' down again, and the twiddlin,' and quaverin' gives me the fidgets awful. Why, if they played something as people understood, they'd be delighted, instead of which they seemed to me as though they were all dooced glad to get away, for I saw a lot rushing off in the middle of the last sonarta, as you call it, as if they thought it was a lucky escape.

Mrs. C. My dear, you must not expect to understand

everything you see and hear in polite society. Many persons see the moon shine; but very few understand why it shines.

Mr. C. Ah! it strikes me there's a pretty good lot of moonshine in the world. If people would only be real and natural, what a precious lot of trouble they would save themselves to be sure.

Mrs. C. Real and natural people are at times very awkward and inconvenient. Even you, Adolphus, although I know you mean well, yet, really, at times your bluntness and honesty make me blush for you.

Mr. C. Well! things is come to a pretty pass when a man can't be honest and say what he thinks without being considered a nuisance. But I know I am a bit rough at times, and I often wonder how it was that you ever consented to become my better half—you, with your fine acquaintances and your knowing all about books and the fine arts, and such like.

Mrs. C. Adolphus, I will be candid with you. I married, you in the first place, because I knew you to be a good, kind, honest old goose.

Mr. C. Now then, no allusions to the shop, you know.

Mrs. C. That's only a figure of speech. Secondly, you are a rough diamond, and I thought it would amuse me to polish you; and, finally, you have force of character and wealth, which some day may, with judicious management, lead us both to the pinnacle of the social fabric. You know I am ambitious, and have views which I wish to see advocated. Women are not yet admitted to Parliament,

but men are, and, Adolphus, *you* must be a member of Parliament.

Mr. C. A what? Ah, ah, ah! oh! this is too much.

Mrs. C. You may laugh, Adolphus, but I am serious.

Mr. C. What, old Crowfoot the poulterer a member of Parliament? that would astonish the Browns, and no mistake.

Mrs. C. There are not a few in that august assembly whose presence there is a cause of wonder, and to none more than to themselves.

Mr. C. Well, my dear, it's all very well saying I *am* to be a member of Parliament, but how am I to get there?

Mrs. C. Nothing more simple. There are three things necessary: Time, Management, and Money; the two first are essential, the latter indispensable.

Mr. C. Well, but how is the thing to be worked? what is the *Modus Operandum?* you see I am quoting Latin already.

Mrs. C. To begin with, you must go into the town-council, you must be nominated for the next vacancy.

Mr. C. Well, but suppose I am not elected.

Mrs. C. All the better for our purpose. If you are rejected twice, you will be made an alderman as a reward for the anxiety you have manifested for the public good, and for your disinterested efforts to serve your fellow-townsmen.

Mr. C. Well, but we are a long way from the House of Parliament yet.

Mrs. C. Not so far as you may imagine. The time will come when it will be necessary to elect a mayor, and then, who so fit as Mr. Alderman Crowfoot, a man, who, by his own exertions, has raised himself to a position of influence and affluence; a gentleman whose sound judgment and thorough knowledge of local affairs have made him eminently fit to discharge the important and onerous duties of a chief magistrate; a gentleman long and honourably connected with the commerce of the town, whose urbanity, intelligence, and integrity, no less than his high social position and wealth, point him out as in every way qualified to fulfil the important functions of the office to which it is proposed to elect him, and to uphold the honour, dignity, and influence of this great and intelligent community?

Mr. C. Bravo, bravo! why, I already fancy myself in the town-hall, surrounded by all the big wigs, presiding at the first grand banquet, with the big gold chain round my neck, and proposing the health of her most gracious Majesty the Queen, the Prince and Princess of Wales, and all the members of the Royal Family. It really does seem pretty easy; but you haven't got me into Parliament yet.

Mrs. C. As I said before, it requires time and management. After your arduous duties as mayor, it will be necessary that you should seek rest and change of scene. You will pay a visit for a few months to some snug and pleasant country town. You will take a large house, or have a suite of rooms at the best hotel. You will visit

and entertain the best people; you will interest yourself in the local charities; show yourself a friend of education; become a member and patron of the local institutions; flatter the working-men; give coals and blankets to the old women, and kiss the babies. And in due course I shall have the proud satisfaction of reading in the *Times* that "The election of a Member of Parliament for the important borough of Muddleton took place yesterday, resulting in the triumphant return of Mr. Alderman Crowfoot, who, during a brief residence in the town, had won the good opinion of all classes of the inhabitants by his consistent support of all the local institutions, and by the display of unostentatious liberality and genial hospitality.

Mr. C. It seems to me, my dear, it's about time they passed a bill for Women's Rights. If women was sent to Parliament you'd make the primest prime minister the Queen ever had. But suppose I do get into Parliament, what shall I do about the speechifying? You are always pulling me up about my grammar.

Mrs. C. Speaking is not of so much importance as many suppose. You can be a silent member, and gain a reputation as a good worker on committees, or you can be a member with a speciality.

Mr. C. What's that? I've heard of speciality sherry; but I never heard of a speciality member of Parliament.

Mrs. C. A member with a speciality is often a great success, and gains the ear and respect of the House, because he only speaks on questions he understands. You,

for instance, know all about geese. You would find many sympathetic hearers on that subject; what more easy than to introduce a Bill to extend the production of that useful and edible bird? The goose is a dainty with the working classes, a dish which they are now only able to enjoy once a year. Imagine the impression you might make in the House and in the country in introducing the measure. Sir, you would say, honourable members may smile at, and receive with ironical cheers, the motion I have now the honour to introduce; gentlemen accustomed to eat the dainty turkey, or the more delicate pheasant or chicken, may indulge in facetious expressions at the mention of the humble, but relishing goose; but, sir, I am not to be made game of, if I may indulge in a common, but forcible phrase, "I am too old a bird for that." I say, sir, that while we have in this great country large tracts of waste land, while we have innumerable ponds and lakes, while we have a bird which affords such a dainty and relishing meal to the toiling millions to whom it is now an almost unattainable luxury,—I say, sir, we should be wanting in our duty to the people at large, if we failed to do all in our power to bring about the happy time, when, in the house of every working-man, not only at Christmas, but on every Sunday, or oftener, we might perceive the savoury and appetising odour of a roast goose stuffed with sage and onions.

Mr. C. Ah! that would be the way to talk to 'em. If it's anything in the poultry line, I could do it like a bird. It may be a lucky thing I was brought up to the

business after all. But I say, you'll be making me a knight or a duke next.

Mrs. C. For those who make use of their opportunities, wealth can do much; but when it is used conjointly with tact and perseverance there is scarcely a limit to the possibilities.

Mr. C. But what would you do now, supposing I really wanted a handle to my name? I say, my dear, it wouldn't look bad in the Court Circular—Sir Adolphus Crowfoot,—would it now? But of course that is a cut above us; I think if we stop at the M.P. business we shall do pretty well, but I really should like to hear you called Lady Crowfoot.

Mrs. C. And why not? by simply extending the principle I have sketched, such a thing is by no means impossible.

Mr. C. Ah! but how?

Mrs. C. You must purchase a piece of land in the suburbs, and lay it out as a park, and present it to the people. The surest way to benefit yourself is to be a benefactor to others. When your park is finished there must be an opening ceremony. All the people are *en fête* on the occasion; the *élite* of the town are assembled; bells ring; bands play; people cheer; and just when the enthusiasm is at its highest, a certain august personage is seen on the dais, holding a sword over another certain person, who hears the magic words, "Rise, Sir Adolphus."

Mr. C. Well, many wonderful things have happened

in the world, and will again, but if ever I should get among the big wigs, I shall try to do my duty like an honest man; and if I should be short of ideas, and want to get up a speech to astonish the Browns, I know I shall only have to apply to my Better Half.

CURTAIN.



LAYS OF COVENTRY.

I.

"SENT TO COVENTRY."

HAVE you ever been sent,
Of your sins to repent,
On a journey to Coventry, there to relent,
And gain for your name
Absolution from blame,
And to take, from henceforth, better care of your fame?
Of course you have heard
This old-fashioned byeword
Applied pretty often to those who have err'd,
For when a man does what good manners don't warrant, he
Gets into disgrace, and we send him to Coventry.

It may cause some surprise
As to what could give rise
To the ban or disgrace which this sentence implies.
You might think a long time, and yet never surmise
Where the gist or the sense of this old saying lies;

But, after a lengthy research for its origin,
Where authors must look, when for facts they are foraging,
I think I may state,
Though I can't give the date,
That it happened, as I am about to relate :—
A detachment of soldiers, all fine jolly fellows,
Who had gained ill repute for their sad peccadilloes,
And all kinds of mischief, for which they'd no warranty,
Were once, with their officers, stationed at Coventry.

Having nothing to fill
Up their time but their drill,
A work that may almost be counted as *nil*,
And finding this dull kind of life quite provoking,
They made up their minds for some practical joking ;
So out they would sally,
Without *shilly-shally*,
In search of diversion, through street, lane, and alley,
Determined to scare what the French call *ennui*,
By what they jocosely termed "having a spree."

They would bully the men in a swaggering tone,
And of course they could not let the lasses alone ;
And the simple old ladies they thought were just fit
To be used as a butt for the shafts of their wit.
They delighted in tanning the hide of a tanner,
If anything gave them offence in his manner ;
And seemed to consider their caps had a feather in,
When "welting" the cobbler, they gave him a "leatherin."

Or thinking the dyer looked rather too blue,
They would soon dye his cloth of a different hue;
And then, if the baker looked crusty, poor soul,
In the nearest black ditch they would give him a roll.
They played up such pranks, in this quiet locality,
That what they called fun seemed to others rascality;
And their wickedness gained for them such notoriety,
As soon shut them out from all decent society.
The young women pouted,
The old ladies flouted,
Wherever they went they were hooted and scouted
By brewers and bakers
And candlestick-makers,
And the tradesmen who sold what some people call "taters,"
Till there wasn't a place
Where they dared to show face,
And they soon had to fly from the town in disgrace.

The story I've told, was so often repeated
By those who had seen how these rascals were treated,
That each generation
Preserved the narration.
And now, when we wish to inflict castigation,
Or show our displeasure and just indignation
To those whose ill conduct too long we've endured,
We "send them to Coventry," there to get cured.

II.

A VISIT TO COVENTRY FAIR.

HAVING thus cleared away
By his little survey,
Of events that occurred in an earlier day,
Any doubts that might stray
Or be called into play
As to what this trite saying intends to convey,
I now, with your leave, will proceed with my lay;
And here I may say
I intend you to pay
(That is, if your leisure admits the delay)
A visit to Coventry, while it is gay
With its annual fair, which, in festive array,
Makes many hearts glad at this great holiday.
'Tis a bright afternoon
In the sweet month of June,
When the echoes resound with the *dicky-bird's* tune;
The laughing wild flowers gay colours assume;
The zephyrs are laden with fragrant perfume;
Her ladyship, Nature, though sometimes capricious,
Resolves that the day shall be truly auspicious;
And, in order that all may her beauty admire,
She decks her fair form in her gayest attire.
The roads are alive with holiday folk,
All flocking from Binley, from Sow, and from Stoke:*

* Villages in the vicinity of Coventry.

The wenches and lads,
With their mothers and dads,
Are tripping along through the fields and the *pads*,
All laughing, and talking, and cracking their jokes;
Some riding on horses, and some upon *Mokes*,
(As donkeys are called by "Bill Styles" and "Jack Nokes"),
Who think it much better to drive than to coax,
As they hasten their speed with unmerciful pokes,
For they know there are marvellous sights to be seen
At Coventry Fair upon "Greyfriar's Green."
The swings and the shows,
The stalls all in rows,
Where they sell the fine toys
For good girls and boys,
The dolls, hoops, and carts,
The sweetmeats and tarts,
And the nuts made of spice,
Which they say are "so nice."
And then, O my stars!
All the handsome bazaars,
What splendid arrays
Of tea-boards and trays;
In all my born days
I ne'er saw such displays
Of baskets, and teaspoons, and teapots, and caddies,
All of which, the young lady to sell you so glad is.
And then, farther on,
There is funny "cheap John,"

With his patter and clatter,
His jocular chatter,
And the folk crowding round him to see what's the matter.
Then the large caravan
With the famed "little man,"
And the one with the drum
Invites us to come
And see the performance of little "Tom Thumb,"
Who will sing you a song, and dance you a jig,
After which you will see master "Toby the pig,"
"A *hanimal* not to be *ek'led* by *hany*—
The *wole* to be seen for the charge of *vun* penny."

And now in the crowd, let us come to a stand,
To hear the performance of Wombwell's fine band.
Now they've done, let us go
And see the next show.
Good gracious, look there!
A man in the air;
He has doubled himself in a ball, I declare.
Oh! look at the fairies in pink and in white;
The man dressed in spangles, is known as a "sprite;"
And he in the pinafore, he's the buffoon;
And the one next to him is the old pantaloon.

Then look at the smugglers,
The sailors and jugglers,
And the tragedy queen in her black velvet gown,
Just looking as if she could kill with a frown,

As she walks the parade with her dagger and crown,
Arm-in-arm with the comical merry old clown,
Who makes his harangue
'Mid the noise and the clang
Of the gongs and the pistols, and guns going "bang,"
And the cymbals and drums, and the loud shrieking tones
Of trumpets, and cornets, bassoons, and trombones.
"Walk in, walk in, just about to commence,
The best show in the fair, and the charge is sixpence."
The drama, terrific, exciting, and shocking,
Is known as the "Knight of the Red Worsted Stocking,"
And murder is done, and poison is swallowed,
And the knight comes home from the wars, being followed
By a beautiful page, who, at last it turns out,
Is the lady there's been so much bother about.
And, after a time, they all stand in a row.
And form on the stage an imposing tableau,
And the curtain comes down, and the actors retire
'Midst a gorgeous display of red and blue fire.
The performance concludes with a novel, sublime,
Quizzical, comical, pantomime,
Entitled "The Gnome of the Golden Mine;
Or, the Fairy Queen of the Mystic Vine."
"Step up, step up, be in time, be in time.
All hearts are light,
All eyes are bright,
And nothing but happiness meets the sight,
The beautiful girls, the dear charming creatures,
With radiant smiles on their beautiful features,
Are darting bright rays from their eyes, as they meet yours.

III.

THE STORY OF LADY GODIVA.

WHY do St. Michael's bells ring out,
While merry children gaily shout,
And pleasure beams on all without?
Why do the flags and banners fly,
While o'er the city far and nigh,
Rejoicing tokens meet the eye?

Whither are going the crowds we meet
On every road, in every street,
All hastening on with nimble feet?

Be it known unto all that, to banish depression,
And keep up their spirits, each trade and profession
Is going to witness the noble procession
Of Lady Godiva, who gained the concession,
And saved the good people from wrong and oppression.
Oh! how delightful to stand on "The Cross,"
To see the fine lady ride on a white horse,
No "rings on her fingers or bells on her toes,"
As the rhyme in the juvenile story-book goes,
But, what's more surprising, with very few clothes—
An act, by the way, some prudish folks say
To their notions of modesty gives quite a shock,
To see her thus riding with such a short frock,
And they give to each other a shake of the head;
And though nothing to injure her fair name is said,

Yet one standing by to infer might be led
That the lady in question had not been well bred;
And many, no doubt, very soundly would rate her
For showing in public the beauties of *natur.*

But again, there are some,
To see the sight come,
So far from condemning this part of the show
That cry out, Encore! or else Bravissimo!

No doubt my young readers would all like to hear
Why they keep up this pageantry, year after year.
It appears that Leofric, a powerful Earl,
A greedy, rapacious, tyrannical churl,
About *anno domini* ten-forty-three,
Was lord and possessor of all Coventry,
And to keep up his state,
He laid rate after rate,
And tax upon tax,
On the poor people's backs,
Till, quite in despair
They were heard to declare,
That the Earl, though a "gent," never acted as such,
Which appears to have vexed his mightiness much.
So "to feed his revenge" with cruel malignity,
He taxed them tenfold for this slight on his dignity.

The people were now in a worse fix than ever,
So, choosing a few who were thought to be clever
At making a speech, they sent a petition

With all due submission,
Expressing contrition,
And begging the Earl for the tax's remission.
Now the Earl, when he heard
Their petition preferred,
And found that the people to pay him demurred,
Says he, "Pooh, pooh; nonsense; the thing is absurd."
From which observation it might be inferred
His better emotions were not to be stirred;
And 'twas his intention to stick to his word:
And, if right I've been told, he distinctly averred
That he wouldn't relax
A tithe of the tax,
Although it should break all the citizens' backs;
And, said he, "With the trade you have got in the city,
If you can't pay this trifle, I think it's a pity;
And I finally say, once for all, my fine jokers,
If you don't do it quickly, I'll put in the brokers,
And seize all your tables, chairs, shovels, and pokers."
Now, after he had
Some further *confab*
With the person who most had the "gift of the gab,"
They saw, as he stood with his back to the fire,
The Earl was beginning to kindle with ire;
So they thought, as they certainly didn't desire
To ruffle his temper, they'd better retire.
They knew he was given to raving and storming,
So, taking his menacing look as a warning,
They put on their hats, and all bade him good morning.

Now the Countess Godiva, the wife of the Earl,
Was as much like an angel as he like a churl;
She was lovely, sweet-tempered, her heart, most humane,
Was never appealed to by any in vain,
And people who came
Her assistance to claim,
Were received in a manner so kind and urbane,
Without the least arrogance, pride, or disdain,
That each one who knew her could never refrain
From speaking her praises again and again,
'Tis said that she often would leave the domain,
And go in the night, through the wind or the rain,
To succour the wretched in sickness and pain.
In short, she was famous all over the county, full
Twenty miles round, as the good Lady Bountiful.

Well, the lady, on learning the heavy taxation
Imposed, to the people's dismay and vexation,
And knowing the citizens couldn't afford
To pay the enormous demands of her lord,
Determined on using her utmost endeavour
As soon as the Earl and herself were together,
To induce him, with all her persuasion and art,
To take off the whole of the tax, or a part;
So the next day, at breakfast, she made her appeal
To the Earl, who was carving some nice ham and veal,
And she said, "My dear lord, don't you think that the levy
You've made on the people is rather too heavy?

You know it is seldom—nay, don't look severe—
In matters of this kind that I interfere:
Yet I'm told by our tradesmen, some twenty or more,
They already can scarce 'keep the wolf from the door,'
A fact that I cannot but deeply deplore;
And the town, they declare, is in such a condition
It cannot endure any fresh imposition."
"That's all very fine," said the Earl, with a sneer;
"But you mustn't believe all the tales that you hear.
Those rascally fellows would make it appear
That they don't earn a shilling a week through the year;
They'd like to get off if they could, I don't doubt it;
It's no use you talking, you know nought about it—
I must have the money, and can't do without it."
And he said, with a frown,
"When you ride through the town
Divested of petticoat, bodice, or gown,
Or anything else that will constitute raiment,
I'll take off the tax, and release them from payment."
Now the Lady Godiva, as you may be sure,
When she heard the proposal her husband made to her,—
A proposal, I think, nay, I'm sure, is the oddest I
Ever heard made to a lady of modesty—
With feelings of anger and shame was imbued,
At a speech which she thought so improper and rude.
But finding persuasion and coaxing to fail,
That all her entreaties did nothing avail,
And having resolved, as most ladies do,
To have her own way in the object in view,

She said, "If he wouldn't give ear to her wish,
There would soon be *a very fine kettle of fish;*
And sooner than they
These taxes shall pay,"
Said the Lady Godiva, "I'll DO as you say."
So she ordered her charger, a beautiful grey,
To be ready by twelve, at the latest, next day;
And having resolved on the city's redemption,
She ordered the people, without an exemption,
To stay within doors, and not to look out
Of their windows, as she was a-riding about:
And if she should find any one so unkind
As to peep or to look
Through crevice or nook
Or any concealment they sheltered behind,
She hoped on the instant they might be struck blind.
Her resolve was proclaimed by the old city crier,
And the people enjoined from the streets to retire;
And at twelve the next day, to her time quite exact,
The Lady rode out, to perform the good act
That should make her tyrannical husband retract
The impost which he had thought fit to enact.

Each one from the street
Had beat a retreat;
And as she rode on, not a soul did she meet.
But I'm sorry to add,
That a rascally bad
And impudent fellow, who seemingly had

A very ill name,
Very much to his shame,
Must open his window and peep at the dame.
But that very same night,
And it well served him right,
'Tis said that he suffered the loss of his sight.
Old Peeping Tom's effigy still may be seen
At the end of the turning to "Greyfriar's Green."
And now, there is little remains to be told,
Except that the Lady, so good and so bold,
With firmness of purpose, not easily shaken,
Completed the task she had thus undertaken.
And so from the tax was the city released,
The people no more of their money were fleeced,
And the fame of the Lady Godiva increased.
And thus to this day, in order to show
How much to her favour and goodness they owe,
And also that despots and tyrants may know
Their deep-rooted hatred of wrong and oppression,
They keep up the Lady Godiva procession.

THE MONASTERY,

AND

THE MONKS OF ST. BENEDICT.

THOSE who study the annals of England will see
That forty years after the tenth centurie,
There was built in, or near unto, fair Coventry,
By the great Earl of Mercia, a monastery.
And the work that will show
If this was so or no,
Is the record of William of Malmesbury;
For this ancient historian seems to have been
A man of shrewd parts, and uncommonly keen
To note the events, with the wars and the crimes,
That mark the advance of these troublesome times.
We also are told by the same old recorder,
That twenty-three monks of the Benedict order,
With an abbot, who acted as master or lord,
Were herein provided with bed and with board;
And to keep them supported with wine, bread, and beef,
One half of the town, with each "chiefrie" and "fief,"
With twenty-three "lordships," to them were made over
To add to their comfort, and keep them in clover.

And when Edward the pious, surnamed the Confessor,
Was placed on the throne, and became the possessor
Of all these estates, he said, as of yore,
These gifts should accrue to the church evermore.

Now these Benedict monks were not so absurd
As some other orders of whom we have heard:
They didn't believe in abstaining from food,
Or scourging the flesh for their spiritual good;
They only used whips when riding their hacks,
But never laid on to their own pious backs;
They would rather lay siege to a capon or pheasant
Than indulge in a regime so very unpleasant.
In making a journey they never would choose,
To start on their tour without sandals or shoes,
Though prone, like most mortals, to err now and then,
On the whole they behaved like sensible men.
If scruples they had about mōnastic rigour,
They strove to preserve their corporeal vigour.
But ill-natured citizens made this a handle,
For dealing in slander, detraction, and scandal,
And said, very much to their shame, as we read,
Number one was a prominent part of their creed,
And they added also, which my mind as I'm writing shocks,
That our monks used to live like a party of fighting cocks;
That at night, after vespers, all decency scorning,
They would sit bibbing wine till the break of the morning,
Singing songs most profane by the bright blazing logs,
Like roystering, rollicking, gay "jolly dogs."

'Tis sad to reflect
How the most circumspect
May raise up suspicions they little expect;
And though conscientious in every action,
Be basely belied by a slanderous faction.
If a monk rather stout was seen blowing or puffing,
'Twas straightway put down to his gorging and stuffing,
And if, from dyspepsia, derangement arose,
Which made itself seen by a bloom on the nose,
You'd hardly suppose
This was said to disclose
A passion for tippling "under the rose."
In short these good men, by the class I refer to,
Were said to be terribly wanting in virtue,
And though they were cautious in playing their cards,
Instead of Black Friars were by some called blackguards.

But what did our monks of Benedict say,
To being traduced in this slanderous way?
Did they bluster, or storm, or fly in a passion?
Not at all, for man's failings they'd too much compassion;
Their system of logic,
Was too philosophic,
For them to show wrath in so wicked a fashion.
With feelings of pity and charity large,
They listened to all that was laid to their charge,
And 'stead of it causing them trouble or bother,
It went in at one ear and out at the other;

For how could they find
Fit tranquil of mind,
For chemical studies, or laws of astronomy,
If attention they paid
To all that was said
Of things which concerned their domestic economy?
Human nature to them was spread out like a book,
And from its broad pages this lesson they took:—
That wherever goodness and virtue are known,
There envy and malice have always been shown.
The greatest of men have been subjects of slander,
From fiddling Nero to Pope Alexander.
With their minds in this train,
It was useless and vain,
For dealers in *canards*, or mischievous rumour,
By gossiping prattle,
Or base tittle-tattle,
To think of disturbing their usual good humour;
A smile of benignity
Tempered with dignity,
Still marked their mien as they walked in the town,
And a scowl or a frown,
From the cowl of a gown,
Was never displayed by these monks of renown.

In the hour of trial or sore tribulation
Good men can always find some consolation;
Had this been the wish of our friends the Black Friars,
Had they felt the emotions which slander inspires,

The deep-eating canker
Of hatred or rancour,
A solace they had, one for which we all hanker,
A goodly round sum in the hands of the banker.
They were not what are commonly called "men of straw,"
But from this you must not a wrong inference draw,
Or imagine, because they were prudent and saving,
They ever were grasping at riches, or craving,
Like some we have known, to amass a great sum,
In the hope, that at last they might die worth a "plum."
They only prized wealth for the blessings it brings
To those who are skilled in the use of such things.

Meanwhile, by the aid of Leofric, who nourished
A love for the order, the priory flourished,
And Lady Godiva, as usual, the means
Of largely promoting benevolent schemes,
She also bestowed on it treasures so ample,
And so many followed her charming example,
And people, so vied in their acts of munificence,
The building, at last, was a blaze of magnificence.
And Florence of Worcester relates in his annals
How gorgeous and rich were the walls and the panels
With silver and gold, while between the pilasters
Were portraits of saints by the very first masters.
'Tis food for regret
That science had yet
Not made men aware of the art of photography,

For with this behoof
What a positive proof
Might have been handed down of this church's ichnography.

But time, all relentless, his shadow has cast
On the splendours, and glories, and deeds of the past,
And palace, and cottage, and peasant, and sage
(Though briefly enduring in history's page),
In dust, by the torrent and whirlwind are tossed,
Till their traces, and e'en their dim records, are lost.



MRS. TOMKINS ON SERVANT GALS.

I'M not at all inquisitive,
But I should like to know
The state of things we're coming to,
In this here wale below.
The more I sees of this here world,
The more I must confess,
It seems to me we're getting
In a pretty sort of mess;
Especially them servant gals,
They puzzles me outright,
And sometimes when I thinks of 'em,
I lays awake at night.
Why, lor' bless *me*, when I was young,
You *knew* a servant gal,
But now you hardly knows 'em
From a lady in Pall Mall.
And as to one to wash and scrub,
As knows what she's about,
They seems to me to want a place,
Where all the work's put out.
One morning, at my cousin's house,
I stopped to make a call,

And first I heard a strumming,
And then I heard a squall;
And when they lets me in, I says,
Why, bless me, cousin Hannah,
Whoever is that squalling,
And a thumpin' the pianna?
I almost busts a laughing
When I repeats the tale,
She says, "It's only Mary Jane,
A practising the scale."
The bare idea of such a thing,
It puts me in a rage,
But cousin Hannah says "this is
The cultivated age."
From what I hears from friends of mine,
I think it's pretty clear,
Things are improving backwards,
And gets worse from year to year.
A servant gal, when I was young,
Could cook, and bake, and brew,
But now they hardly knows the way
To make a Hirish stew.
They flaunts about, and dresses out,
And gives themselves such airs,
They'll soon be wanting of a hoist
To carry 'em upstairs.
At one time with ten pounds a year,
They thought theirselves well off,
But if you offers twenty now
They makes you quite a scoff.

Of course I doesn't mean to say
As one and all is bad,
But servant gals of any sort,
Is hardly to be had.
A friend of mine as hadwertised,
For three weeks in rotation,
And never had a hanser back,
Or single application ;
My husband can't tell how it is,
And he thinks hisself clever,
The popilation tables show
There's more gals born than ever.
But I think the explanation
Isn't wery far to find,
And servants would be plentiful
If ladies had a mind.
It's got to be the fashion now,
For high, and low as well,
To think as work's degradin',
And to try and cut a swell.
And there ain't no more young women now,
No matter what their trade is,
They one and all expects to be
Considered as young ladies.
I've often heard my mother say,
And I believe it's true,
That even gentlefolks's gals,
Had always work to do.
Some made the beds, and ironed shirts,
And others did the stitchin' ;

And every wife, as was a wife,
Attended to her kitchen.
I'm told as it was wonderful,
How they could sew and knit,
And it didn't spile their beauty,
Or their manners, not a bit.
And now I says to ladies all,
As gets into a fix,
With servant gals a-showin' airs,
And playin' up their tricks;
Instead of feelin' delicate,
As many is inclined to
(It's wonderful what can be done,
If people as a mind to),
You try your hands at makin' beds,
Or any household duty;
And then you'll have good appetites,
And strength as well as beauty.
And then if gals gives himperdence
To Missises, and flout 'em,
They'll see, as ladies as can work,
Can do as well without 'em.
If ladies thought as much of work
As ridin' in a carriage,
They wouldn't find it quite so hard
To make a proper marriage.
If white and red on ladies' cheeks,
By work was made to mingle,
They'd never have to pine or fret
Because of being single;

For nice young men as now goes out,
A-seekin' selfish pleasure,
Would go down on their bended knees,
To win a household treasure.
So my advice to ladies is,
Both single and parental,
To try and be as useful
As you now is ornamental.



"WHAT SHALL I DO WITH IT?"

WRITTEN IN A LADY'S ALBUM.

My dear Mrs. S., I'm afraid,
When you glance at the title I've hit on,
You'll think that my muse is arrayed
In the plumes of the late Bulwer Lytton.

But if it should kindle your ire
That my rhyme has a plagian view with it,
If by chance you should be near the fire,
'Twill suggest to you what you should do with it.

But now that my task is begun,
I hardly know how to get through with it:
I am caught in the web I have spun,
And the question is, What shall I do with it?

I must try to proceed with my theme,
And I hope for indulgence from you with it,
For if longer I parley, 'twill seem
That I really don't know what to do with it.

For success, we all struggle through life,
And Providence blesses but few with it,
And prosperity oft in the strife
Falls to those who knows least what to do with it.

Our existence brings many a charm,
Yet often comes sorrow and woe with it,
And they will be safest from harm
Who have light to know best what to do with it.

Our airy-built castle will fall,
And bright visions fade from our view with it;
But then we should think after all,
If it stood, should we know what to do with it?

Whatever our aim, while we live,
Let us try to be honest and true with it;
And may He who the talent doth give
Make us also to know what to do with it.

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE TEMPERANCE FESTIVAL HELD IN SAINT MARY'S HALL, COVENTRY, 22D MARCH 1859.

Being the day of Coventry Races.

THIS fair assembly in this grand old Hall,
Must to our minds some pleasing scenes recall.
And thoughts of happy days, and joys now past,
Will o'er the memory pleasing shadows cast.
Historians of the future may record,
That in St. Mary's Hall the festive board
Has oft been spread, while many a guest partakes
"The cup that cheers, but not inebriates."
And many too, assembled here to-night,
Will think how oft they came with that delight,
Terpsichore's admirers only know
To trip it on "the light fantastic toe."
Here, too, our thoughts have oft been borne along,
And wrapt in ecstasy by bursts of song,
We've felt from earth our fancy soaring higher;
Enchanted by the music of Apollo's lyre.

Once more within these ancient walls we meet
The pleasant faces of our friends to greet,
And, as in social chat the time we spend,
And grasp the hand of brother or of friend,
In simple pleasures we our hours employ,
And need no false excitement to enjoy.
But, while amusements our attention claim,
Our meeting has a nobler, higher aim.
We meet to-night the story to relate
Of that dark spot upon our social state,
That one great ill, to others giving birth,
That spreads distress and sin throughout the earth;
That plague spot on our land, the source from whence
So many evils spring—Intemperance.
Oh! what a glorious era that will be,
When this dear land of England shall be free
From that dark stain that now her sons disgrace,
And all the attributes of manhood doth debase.
When men in health shall live life's longest span,
And shun the ill that makes man *less* than man.

A concourse of people assembled to-day
To witness a race near at hand,
And horses, and jockeys in sporting array
Are parading before the Grand Stand.
The Horses are prancing,
And crowds are advancing,
All eager to witness the race;
And on they come rushing,
And crushing, and pushing

Each other, to get the best place.
And voices the hoarsest,
And jokes of the coarsest
Are heard in that terrible din—
And men, wisdom lacking,
Are eagerly backing
The horse that is meant *not* to win.
And every device
Is displayed to entice
The unwary to gamble and play,
And many will know
Privation and woe,
From their loss on the racecourse to-day.
And there, in the midst of this clamour and rout,
This reckless and riotous revel,
The demon, strong drink, is lurking about,
And urges his victims to join in the shout,
And incites them to every evil.
And folly and wine
In the hubbub combine,
To aid the foul fiend in his work,
And he chuckles and laughs
While each devotee quaffs
Of the cup where the poison doth lurk.

Let us turn from this scene of confusion and noise
And see if our Temperance Meeting
Will not bring us pleasure, with fewer alloys
Than are found in those wild bacchanalian joys,
Where folly and crime are competing.

Our eyes are all bright,
Our vision is clear,
We can look any man in the face without fear,
Our hands do not tremble,
We've no aching heads,
We slumber in peaceful repose in our beds,
We rise in the morning all cheerful and gay,
And go with a will to the work of the day,
We rush into no mad excitement to find,
In the tavern, or ale-house, relief for the mind ;
And happier far is the moderate man
Who passes through life on the Temperance plan,
Than he whose desires induce him to crave,
For the cup that brings death and a premature grave.
The blessings and joys that sobriety brings,
We know from experience well,
We have felt that from Temperance happiness springs,
And fits us for better and nobler things
In the beautiful world where we dwell.
Oh ! if there are any now present, who still
Are unable strong drink to forego,
I say to you, earnestly, use your strong will,
And vow from this moment to banish the ill
That is fraught with such sorrow and woe.
Oh ! stand not irresolute, come to our aid,
We have need of a powerful band,
Let your names on the scroll with our own be arrayed,
The work of our mission must not be delayed,
For the enemy now is at hand.

And let us all make a resolve from this night
To work with our utmost endeavour,
And aid the good cause with our strength and our
might,
That all may be happy and dwell in the light
Of the truth that endureth for ever.



ANGELA SMITH.

MISS Angela Smith was exceedingly smart,
For in life she had one ruling passion;
And the dearest delight of her vain little heart
Was to dress in the height of the fashion.

Her mind was absorbed in new dresses and gloves,
In a mantle of sealskin or ermine,
Or the latest vagary in bonnets, which proves
That she hadn't much leisure for learning.

Miss Smith was a milliner, skilled in her trade
And as she sat hemming and stitching,
Her eyes had that kind of expression which said,
"You must see that I look quite bewitching.

Whene'er through the day she'd a moment to spare
From her puffing and plaiting and quilling,
This vain little maid to her glass would repair,
To make her appearance more killing.

I am sorry to say she was almost ashamed
Of her parents, two good honest souls,
And omitted to mention, whene'er they were named,
That they dealt in soap, candles, and coals.

Miss Angela Smith had of lovers no lack;
Indeed it was quite the reverse,
For at least half-a-dozen, with love on the rack;
Would have had her for better or worse.

But this vain little milliner turned up her nose
At the plain honest fellows who sought her;
And fondly expected, as you may suppose,
That some rich handsome merchant would court her.

But rich handsome fellows in search of a wife
Think marriage imprudent and rash,
Unless at the time when they settle in life
They obtain with the lady some cash.

So year after year did this vain little maid
Continue to dress in the fashion,
But no dashing beau, in fine garments arrayed,
Came forward declaring his passion.

She saw with dismay that her once pretty face,
And the charms with which Nature endowed her,
Grew faded and wan, so their bloom to replace,
She took to cosmetics and powder.

Too late she found out that her worship of self,
Had of chances of marriage bereft her,
The young fellows saw she was laid on the shelf,
And there they disdainfully left her.

So, pretty young ladies, a word of advice:
If you wish to excite admiration,
Ne'er let the vain goddess of fashion entice,
You to dress in advance of your station.

If lovers propose who are honest and true,
Think twice e'er their suits you are scorning;
Remember the fop will think little of you,
And most of his vain self adorning.

The husbands worth having but seldom are led
To propose by a smart dress or bonnet,
And think more of the sense that is inside the head
Than they do of the fine feathers on it.

BOLD STREET ON A SUMMER'S DAY.

'Tis very pleasant on a summer's day,
'Midst Bold Street shops to while an hour away,
To mingle with the crowd, and as we turn
From right to left, some useful lesson learn.
A panorama this fine street displays
Of teeming life, in ever-varying phase;
Who could be sad in such a street as this,
Which shadows forth the height of human bliss?
The costly needs of wealth and high condition—
The bright rewards of gratified ambition—
All that the markets of the world supply
For man's luxurious wants, here meets the eye.
Here art and skill on every hand entice,
And fashion's slaves behold their paradise.
How bright all seems—how gaily dressed the throng—
How grandly roll the carriages along!
Whose blazon'd panels tell of high estate,
Or something which their owners think as great.
The portly coachman gravely shares his seat
With "Jeames," the footman, sprightly, trim, and neat;
While horses, men, and equipage display
The seeming joys of fortune's flowery way.

The sunburnt captain fresh from off the main,
To Bold Street comes to spend his well-earned gain ;
And, grateful for the joy of home caresses,
Buys for his wife and daughters new silk dresses.
Now, dressed superbly, see the languid swell
With eye-glass, staring at each passing belle ;
Convinced beyond a doubt that each and all
Admire his figure and his graceful crawl.
The gay young spark who talks of loves and doves,
To Jugla's hastens for a box of gloves,
To win a smile from one of Eve's fair daughters,
Whose dainty digits measure six-three-quarters.
And now a troop of lovely girls we see,
Who scan with longing the Maison Dorée,
Or seek the latest mode, which rivalry eclipses,
Amongst the costly wares at Woollright's or at Cripps's.
Thus beauty, wealth, and fashion all unite,
Our eyes with pleasing visions to delight ;
And decked in vestments rare, with graceful mien,
The ladies lend enchantment to the scene.
And now in little groups they pause to chat,
While passing beaux politely raise the hat ;
And many a swain his path of life may trace
Back to the radiance of some beaming face,
Whose brilliant eyes directed Cupid's dart,
And there, in busy Bold Street, stole his heart.
Here, like a relic of a bygone age,
The old Lyceum will our thoughts engage,
Where prosperous tradesmen sit in cosy chairs
To read the news, or learn the price of shares.

Here, good John Perris, whom we all deplore,
Dispensed to youth and sage his learned store;
And knew by heart the numbers, shelves, and nooks,
With authors' names of fifty thousand books.
Oh! would some fairy stipulate that I
Should have whatever Bold Street could supply,
As tribute to my multifarious merits,
As Mrs. Gamp would say, "'twould cheer my sperrits."
Seaton and Boggs should decorate my hall,
And Urquhart furnish it for fête or ball.
Its rooms and offices should be replete
With tasteful ironware from Mr. Peet.
Dreaper and Son, or Mr. N. Van Gruisen,
Should send a grand piano, such a nice un!
For fine examples of ceramic art
I'd choose from Litherland's surprising mart;
And oft, to make selection, I would tarry
Where art is fostered, "*a la Ville de Paris.*"
My house should rival the abode of kings;
Hargreaves should furnish me with diamond rings;
And when I wished to spread my board in state,
I'd go to Dismore for my silver plate.
My face to future ages should go down
In cartes-de-visite by Vandyke and Brown;
Of hams and jams and toothsome things I like,
I'd get a large supply from Mr. Dyke.
And when to eat I wanted something good
I'd go to lunch or dine with Mr. Wood;
Nicoll my stylish garments should prepare,
And Powell every day should dress my hair.

And should my brain with toil be overwrought,
Or if my heart were sad with pensive thought;
Should friends prove false, or fortune seem unkind,
Or aught occur to vex my troubled mind;
To kill the blues, and chase my cares away,
I'd walk in Bold Street on a summer's day.



ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE CONVERSAZIONE OF THE PROPRIETORS OF THE LYCEUM, NOVEMBER 9, 1866.

ONE night after ten, when the readers were gone,
And I, like the rose, was "left blooming alone,"
Ere starting for home, where my supper was waiting,
I stood for a while in this room *room*inating;
And heard, strange to say, from the walls and the ceiling
A moan of complaint, a deep sorrow revealing,
In tones that betrayed, in their utterance thick,
The pent-up emotions of mortar and brick.
Walls are said to have ears,
And calming my fears
(As I freely confess that my nerves were unstrung),
I speedily found that these walls had a tongue;
And at first, when I heard their deep moan of complaint,
I thought they were asking a fresh coat of paint.
But no, 'twas not that; and though strange it may seem,
These eloquent walls had a different theme,
And they said unto me, "We have done duty here
Through summer and winter for many a year,

And great are the changes these walls have surveyed
Since the foundation stone of the building was laid;
Old Liverpool worthies who raised the 'Old Town,'
In the days that are gone, to commercial renown,
We have seen one by one pass away in rotation,
And their places filled up by a new generation.
And day after day,
Men are still growing grey,
And here, as of old, they sit reading away
At the *Standard*, the *Herald*, the *Times*, or the *'Tiser*,
Or wishing on local events to grow wiser,
Our Liverpool Dailies and Wecklies perusing
For incidents wonderful, strange, or amusing;
Some for statistics of commerce and trade,
To learn the neat trick by which fortunes are made
By investments in cotton, in shares, or provisions;
Enjoying the fun of Election Commissions,
Disclosing the price of a Lancaster Voter,
A '*Nottingham Lamb*,' or 'a fat *Yarmouth Bloater:*'
Or *Porcupine's* pages exposing a job,
And giving hard knocks to the *Cad* and the *Snob;*
Or the *Liverpool Journal* for talk upon ''Change,'
And when sudden panics the markets derange;
The *Money Review*, where their object to learn is
The fate of their *Barneds* and *Overend Gurneys;*
Or to see in the telegrams, daily exhibited,
The '*bust-up*' of some great *Bubble Company* (*Limited*).
And this has so long been the daily routine
That we heartily long for a change of the scene,

And we think it too bad that a fine room, as this is,
Should never be graced by the 'Lancashire Witches.
Whene'er we by chance a young lady espy,
She looks up admiringly, heaving a sigh,
And exclaims, while delight soon revisits her glance,
'*Oh my! what a beautiful room for a dance.*'"
Now who but a man with a heart made of steel
Could resist, or make light of, this earnest appeal?
For myself, I confess, I could only endorse
What had thus been advanced, and acknowledge its force;
Especially, too, when The Ladies were named
My susceptible nature could hardly be blamed,
If yielding, at once, to that powerful plea,
I soon sought the aid of the powers that be,
That the hint thus conveyed
Might shortly be made,
What I think they in French call *un fait accompli.*
The Committee, of course, like business men,
Very speedily settled the how and the when;
And despising "*Red Tape*," or circumlocution,
Resolved that the Members of this Institution
Should enjoy, now and then, with their wives and their daughters,
A few happy hours in these very snug quarters;
And after some meetings to plan and consult,
All arrangements were made, and you see the result.
If any there be who can see impropriety
In spending an evening in pleasant society,

In relieving the tedium of business and duty,
Surrounded by objects of taste and of beauty,
To those with ideas and taste thus perverted,
I would say (if from error they *can* be converted),
Come, look on the faces around us to-night,
And say if this scene does not gladden the sight!
And now let us hope that we long may remember,
With great satisfaction, this ninth of November:
A day of rejoicing to all loyal hearts;
The day that gave birth to our Prince, who imparts,
Wherever his graces and virtues are known,
A feeling of love and respect for the throne;
And on this natal day of the "Rose of the State,"
Liverpool chooses her Chief Magistrate.
May justice and dignity mark his career,
Dispensing to strangers the best of good cheer;
May he hold the scales even when dealing with sinners,
But never be scaly when giving good dinners;
May the time be auspicious for each and for all,
That when we this festive occasion recall,
For the Prince, for the Mayor, and ourselves we can say,
May we see many happy returns of the day.



ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE CONVERSAZIONE OF THE PROPRIETORS OF THE LYCEUM, DECEMBER 11, 1867.

I THINK you will own that on festive occasions
'Tis not wise to indulge in long-winded orations,
And as all the young ladies, I see by their glances,
Have a longing regard for the programme of dances,
My address shall be brief; and, not to lose time
By being too *prosy*, I'll put it in rhyme.
A twelvemonth ago, when we met in this room,
We hardly expected the trouble and gloom
That has filled us since then with the blues and the fidgets,
The disturbance of prices
And financial crises,
That pay us such strange periodical visits.
When we see every day fresh disasters are brewing,
When a *Royal* highway proves a highroad to ruin,
When Directors play pranks
With the cash in the banks,
When dividends dwindle,
And companies swindle,

When the oldest inhabitant scarcely recalls
Such smashing, and crashing, and making of calls;
We may say that the year '67 has made
All sixes and sevens of commerce and trade.
Our mills have been sadly deficient of grist,
Since mighty King Cotton went on the sick list;
Nearly all our investments have proved misadventures,
From the luckless Great Eastern to Railway debentures,
And, to add to our cares,
The Bulls and the Bears
(The bane of financial and trading affairs)
Have endeavoured, like sordid unprincipled pests,
With ill-gotten plunder to feather their nests.
Altogether, our faith in Commercial Morality
Has received a rude shock; for fraud, and rascality,
Which sooner or later are always detected,
Have been found to exist where they least were suspected.
Then turning from commerce to matters political,
We find the condition of things somewhat critical.
Those arch traitors, Stephens, and Kelly, and Deasy,
Though scarce worth a thought, have still made us uneasy,
Lest their tricks of escape, and apparent immunity
From Lock, Bar, and Bolt, should cause a revolt
Of their misguided dupes in the Irish community.
But, ladies, don't be at all frightened, I beg,
Remember we've still our renowned Major Greig,
Who will prove, if the Fenians should make too free,
How well he deserves to be made a C. B.,
In the Commons our Members have done a good business,

But they've all more or less been affected with *Dizzy-ness*,
And although we have many political lights,—
Our Gladstones and Lowes, Disraelis, and Brights,—
Reform, after all, must be very dull work,
When Lord Derby calls it "a leap in the dark."
In affairs continental, our ally o'er the way,
Notwithstanding his phrase of *L'Empire c'est la paix*,
Has filled us with vague apprehension and fear
Lest his cry of Peace, peace! prove *une ruse de la guerre*.
Then again, we've another black business before us,
To thrash the fanatical imp Theodorus;
Whose dark deeds of blood appear wanton and aimless,
Who, subtle and sinister,
Has for Prime Minister
Another black gentleman, who shall be nameless.
But spite of the dangers of mountain and plain,
Of hunger and drought, or torrents of rain;
In spite of the thunder of Theodore's missiles,
Or possible blunders of Horse Guard officials,
Napier and our soldiers we'll safely rely on,
To teach due respect for the old British Lion.
In the midst of these storms an encouraging gleam
Bids us hope things are not quite so bad as they seem;
It must cheer us to see in this festive array,
That pleasure and happiness still hold their sway,
Lighting up this old room with the radiant smiles
Of our bright household fairies, whose presence beguiles
All thought of life's worry, and turmoil, and care,
Of which, somehow or other, each one has his share.

Though the year has to many brought trouble and pain,
We will hope that its teachings have not been in vain;
And though we have passed through a season of gloom,
When I see the bright faces to-night in this room,
The sweet voice of Hope seems to whisper that fate
Has good things in store for the year '68.
When the clouds gather thick, and the tempest is near,
Our spirits droop low, with foreboding and fear,
And we see not the sun in his higher sphere shining,
Nor think the dark cloud has a silvery lining.
Let us hope that investors, when money is cheap,
Will be warned by experience to look ere they leap.
May honest fair dealing be once more in vogue,
And exposure soon visit the cheat and the rogue.
May the masses, enfranchised, be foremost to own
Their love for their country, the Queen, and the throne,
And dispel any clouds of mistrust that may lower,
By their sensible use of political power.
May the old town of Liverpool flourish once more,
And her argosies crowd every sea, as of yore;
May the march of improvement its presence soon show
In our new Sefton Park, with its gay Rotten Row.
May the Dock Board and Council no wordy war wage,
But unite to provide us a grand Landing Stage.
May the Council fill wisely the old Civic Chair,
As they did when they chose Mr. Whitley for Mayor;
Though his Worship may not have long service to boast,
E'en opponents must own him the man for the post;
For his talents will prove that the Council most fitly

Elected a *Pict-un* when voting for Whitley.
And now let us hope that each young belle and beau
Will enjoy the delights of the fantastic toe;
But amid the gay whirl have a care of Love's darts,
And don't lose your brooches, your rings, or your hearts.
May this festive Reunion give pleasure to all;
And when we remember our Soirée and Ball,
May this night be regarded by every one here
As one that foreshadowed a Happy New Year.



ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE CONVERSAZIONE OF THE PROPRIETORS OF THE LYCEUM, WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 2, 1868.

WHEN a bashful young man has a few words to say,
The presence of ladies in dazzling array
Is likely to put him in sad trepidation—
Cloud his brilliant ideas in complete obfuscation—
Make his courage ooze out at the soles of his boots,
And the hair of his head feel on fire at the roots,
Set his heart in a flutter, his speech in a stammer,
Upsetting his logic, his nerves, and his grammar.
To prevent a mishap in my speech of to-night,
Or a sudden collapse from a fit of stage-fright,
When the tongue becomes dumb, and all effort refuses,
As usual, I've called in the aid of the Muses;
For alas, and alack,—I haven't the knack
Of our President's method, where eloquence lingers,
And flows through the mazes—of eloquent phrases,
From the tip of his tongue, or the tips of his fingers.
So to give me free play—in what I may say
On popular topics which most interest you,
My muse shall rehearse—in jingling verse,
Some events that have happened since last I addressed you.

As incidents rise on our thoughts retrospective,
We see near at hand or in distant perspective,
The good and the bad, and the light and the shade
In strongly marked contrast before us displayed.
I told you last year that our gallant Napier
Would accomplish his mission on Magdala's height;
And England has shown she can still hold her own
When roused to go forth in defence of the right.
While the sons of Australia fealty evince
By *fêting* and feasting our bold Sailor Prince,
A dastardly ruffian with merciless ball
Made war upon one who is dear to us all;
And while we rejoice that a rib saved his life,
I think he should speedily get a good wife;
For this incident proves that to shield you from harm,
A *rib* at your side often acts like a charm.
Our well-beloved Sovereign, fatigued with the cares
Which attend a great nation's important affairs,
Discarded all state, and, as Duchess of Kent,
For rest and enjoyment to Switzerland went;
And as the pure air of the valley and peak
Brought repose to her mind, and the rose to her cheek,
Her heart felt assured that, where'er she might roam,
Her people would joyously welcome her home.
The stormy reverse of this picture we gain,
As we look o'er the sea to the fair land of Spain,
Where grim Revolution—with stern retribution,
A Queen from her kingdom expels with disgrace,
And the image of Liberty rears in her place.

A glorious summer has smiled on our land,
Our fields have been clothed by a bounteous Hand
In vestments of gold ; and the young and the old
Have courted the sunshine by meadow and lea,
On heath-covered mountain or down by the sea,
Nor dreamed, as they drank of the health-giving gale,
That danger or death could their pleasures assail,—
Behold the swift Train ! how it dashes along,
How bright are the hopes of that pleasure-bound throng,
What joy will be theirs when the journey is o'er,
How gaily they'll roam over mountain and moor.
No dread of disaster awakens their fears,
That train has gone safely for twenty long years *—
But see, even now as they merrily fly
By the verdant hill-side, 'neath the bright summer sky,
The demon mischance impedes their advance
With hideous tokens of death in his glance ;
And crashing, and roaring, with fury outpouring
Engulphs them in flame, to the heavens up-soaring ;
And the young, and the fair, and the strong, and the brave
In a moment are lost in a fiery grave.
This harrowing picture soon fades from the sight,
And the chieftains of politics, armed for the fight,
Appear on the scene with their weapons of strife,
All eager for conquest and war to the knife :
Bold Gladstone the banner of party unfurling,
Disraeli the keen shafts of sarcasm hurling,

* The Abergele accident to the Irish mail train is here alluded to.

While hosts of recruits, with new powers invested,
Press on, as each stronghold is hotly contested.
But now we have passed through our General Election,
And men of both parties have time for reflection;
We can meet our opponents in happier mood,
And in harmony work for the general good.
While the turmoil and strife of this contest was raging,
Two Statesmen of mark were in converse engaging,
And *effete* diplomatic manœuvres eschewing,
Dispersed the dark storm-cloud where mischief was brewing,
Which threatened the dearly-prized friendship to sever,
Of those who we hope may be brothers for ever.
May we always have men such as Johnson and Stanley,*
Who were candid, sincere, patriotic, and manly,
With minds comprehending the good and the great,
While honestly steering the bark of the State.
In Liverpool, corporate matters look hazy,
And local expenses drive ratepayers crazy,
Our schemes of improvement are knocked on the head,
Or, in a wet blanket, put up stairs to bed,
In our palace in Dale Street, where all may descry,
The iron four-poster perched up in the sky.
On the whole, the municipal prospect is dark,
And there's been such a fog over new Sefton Park,
That the trees and the shrubs I am told look forlorn,
And nothing blows there but a man with a horn.

* Alluding to the conference between the President of America and the present Lord Derby, then Lord Stanley.

When we think of the terrible state in which trade is,
We must own that great credit is due to the ladies;
If money is scarce and the income-tax presses,
Have they not curtailed the dimensions of dresses?
Then as to their bonnets, they wear them so small,
That they cost, I am told, next to nothing at all;
Talk of clever financing, no man would have thought of it,
But they understand both the long and the short of it.
Yet a paradox still are the ladies, I fear,
For if ever so saving we still hold them dear.
And here let me say with how much of delight
We see their bright faces around us to-night;
If the Lancashire witches our efforts approve,
We are amply repaid for our labours of love.
But bright eyes are saying as plain as they can,
When shall we get rid of this wearisome man?
And the gallants at sight of the fiddles and flutes,
As they stand in their pumps, or their thin patent boots,
'Tis plain to be seen are all nervously twitching
To join the gay dance with their partners bewitching.
To detain you much longer I know 'twould be folly; you
Must be impatient to greet Mr. MOLYNEUX;
So now, ere you trip it to Streather's sweet strain,
Let us hope that next year we may all meet again,
When the cup of delight once again shall run o'er,—
And, till that happy meeting, I'll say *au revoir.*



PROLOGUE

DELIVERED ON THE OCCASION OF A LECTURE BY MR. CHARLES SHARP, ON THE HUMOROUS SIDE OF LONDON LIFE, AT THE LIVERPOOL INSTITUTE, MOUNT STREET, ON BEHALF OF THE ORPHAN CHILDREN OF A LITERARY GENTLEMAN DECEASED, DECEMBER 6, 1872.

" FROM grave to gay, from lively to severe,"
" The story of our lives, from year to year,"
Is but the tale of Fortune's smile or frown,
The victor's chaplet or the martyr's crown.
Life's dawn may break with sunshine clear and bright,
But cloud, and storm, and tempest come ere night.
To-day our hopes are borne on eagle's wings—
To-morrow Fate its barbèd arrow flings.
Now on the glad and dancing waves we sail,
Wafted to fortune by a prosperous gale;
Anon, wild breakers dash, with furious foam,
And our poor barque is wrecked in sight of home.
In life's stern battle many a valiant knight,
Waging unequal war for truth and right,
Striking at error, armed with virtue's shield,
With all but honour lost, is forced to yield.

We speak to-night of one who nobly fought;
To honour one who only honour sought;
Whose soul, too large for its frail home of clay,
Too soon, alas! sought hence the brighter day.
He lived and worked, with high unselfish aim,
His only wealth a pure unsullied name;
He struggled, toiled, endured, and 'midst the strife
Enlarged our thoughts, and gave new joys to life.
His brilliant wit the pearls of science strung,
To charm the old, and captivate the young;
He probed the secrets of material force,
And traced an atom through creation's course—
Unveiled the charms of nature's smiling face—
Described the comet in his "flight through space"—
Followed the sunbeam in its daily work—
Showed where the wonders of the ocean lurk—
Soared to the Heavens, where countless planets shine—
Explored the wealth of the mysterious mine—
With reverent steps the paths of learning trod,
"Looking, through nature, up to nature's God."
Ere he had time to win an earthly prize,
Unerring wisdom called him to the skies.
In vain is now the sympathetic tear,
He has his mansion in a higher sphere.
He leaves his "footprints on the sands of time,"
His life may help to "make our lives sublime."

Amidst the busy throng that crowds the mart,
A cheerful mien oft hides an aching heart.

The gay costumes that make so brave a show,
Are oft "the trappings and the suits of woe."
'Tis said the world is selfish, heartless, cold,
Ungenerous, mean, absorbed with greed of gold;
But you to-night reprove the cynic's sneer,
A generous impulse prompts your presence here.
Mankind, engrossed with cares and worldly strife,
Scarce heeds the passing of a single life,
But tender orphans miss a father's care.
The home delights, 'twas his delight to share;
The cheery voice, the smile, the fond caress,
Are theirs no more, for they are fatherless.
For these to-night we ask your generous aid,
That in the time to come it may be said:
"A brave man died, of great and lofty mind,
One nobly gifted, tender, true, and kind.
His country saw, admired, and owned his worth,
And loving, claimed his dearest ties to earth.
Cared for his children, dried their bitter tears,
Guarded, with watchful eye, their tender years,
Made bright their path, where all was gloom before,
For love of him whose worthy name they bore."
Thus gifted workers with the fertile brain,
Whose patient labours are the public gain,
Who, self-denying, silent vigils keep,
And weave the subtle thought while others sleep,
Will know, however hard and sad their fate,
Though friends, success, and honours come too late,
That modest worth will win the world's regard,
And truth and virtue still have their reward.

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE CHILDREN'S BAZAAR, HELD BY THE PUPILS OF MR. AND MRS. MOLYNEUX'S ACADEMY, GREAT GEORGE STREET, LIVERPOOL, IN AID OF THE CHILDREN'S INFIRMARY, MAY 12, 1868.

WE learn from One who spoke with wisdom's voice,
That Heaven itself in children doth rejoice,
And man, with all his pride of wit and sense,
Must imitate their guileless innocence,
Ere he can hope to find true lasting peace
In life immortal, when this world shall cease.
And as on earth we seek to walk aright,
These pure spring flowers are ever in our sight,
Teaching to all who live their lives in vain
What they have lost, how much they have to gain.
Existence here would yield us barren joys,
But for the presence of our girls and boys.
How lovingly we greet the joyous sounds,
When children's laughter through the house resounds:
How quickly we discern each budding grace,
How tenderly regard each cherub face—
The dimpled cheeks, where beauty builds her cell,
The roguish eyes, where laughter loves to dwell,

The cherry lips, whereon the mother's kiss
Imprints the seal of pure maternal bliss.
The merchant prince who toils with busy brain,
The sailor brave who ploughs the mighty main,
The traveller seeking shores before unknown,
The peasant, and the queen upon the throne,
Incentives find, in children whom they prize,
For patient toil or daring enterprise.
The roughest natures own their gentle sway,
In saddest hours they chase our griefs away;
They fill our homes with life, and love, and light,
And make the golden dreams of hope more bright.
But, oh! how changed the happiness of home
Should dread contagion to our darlings come.
When pain and sickness pale the roseate hue
Of glowing health, and all the long nights through
We wait and watch, and heave the bitter sigh,
For fear our precious flowers should fade and die.
Oh! then we feel that could we but restore
Our suffering innocents to health once more,
Our lands, our gold, our all, we'd freely give
To see our drooping flowerets thrive and live.
We plead to-day for those whose path of life
Is strewn with thorns; who often, in the strife
Which man with man is waging day by day,
Suffered defeat, and, worsted in the fray,
Retire, despairing to a lot obscure,
Enduring sorrows known but to the poor!
They, like ourselves, to little children yearn,

Their hearts, as ours, with strong affections burn ;
They feel the poignant dart of sorrow's sting,
Without the healing balm that wealth can bring.
Though some may urge that those of low estate,
By lives improvident, deserve their fate ;
Their suffering little ones no tongue can blame,
No heart refuse the sympathy they claim.
Who can the story of their sorrows tell
In those poor homes where poverty must dwell ?
No bright surroundings cheer their hours of pain,
The flowers of summer bloom for them in vain ;
No downy pillow soothes the aching head,
No tender nurses smoothe the tiny bed ;
No dainty food, or produce of the vine,
Their longings gratify, howe'er they pine ;
No skilled physician takes them in his care,
But only wretchedness and pain are there.
He who in wisdom chastens those He loves,
Provides the balm which pain and care removes :
And to this end inspires the heart of man
With generous thoughts, to aid his wondrous plan.
For suffering children of the poor we plead—
Your charity, your sympathy they need.
Those who the joys of happy children share,
In thankfulness of heart will something spare ;
All who the pangs of bitterness have known,
Will judge the needs of sorrow by their own.
The smallest mite will help to raise a smile
On some wan face—some weary hour beguile—

Give ease to pain—to weakness strength impart,
And comfort bring to some poor mother's heart.
May this bright scene in which we stand to-day,
On many a home of gloom reflect its ray,
Turn tears to smiles, despair to hope and joy,
Healing the wounds which health and life destroy.
A noble cause an earnest effort claims;
May good results await on generous aims.
Be ours the task to aid this work of love,
In humble hope of blessings from above.



ADDRESS

DELIVERED BY MRS. CLIFFORD COOPER ON THE OPENING OF THE THEATRE-ROYAL, OXFORD, 1875.

WHEN, after absence, friends meet once again,
To link anew the sympathetic chain,
Some words of greeting to the lips will rise
Expressive of the heart's sweet ecstasies.
To dear old Oxford we again return,
Whose pleasant memories oft made us yearn
To meet once more, in this familiar place,
The cheerful welcome of each smiling face.

Taking example by the London stage,
Where lady managers are all the rage,
My "dearer self," the "partner of my life,"
Will leave the stage direction to his wife,
And so I come to ask your kind support
While he's away on business of "The Court."

I have been told that learned sages say,
"When woman wills she's sure to have her way,"

So I'm resolved, now that I hold the reins,
In winning hearts and hands to spare no pains.
Backed by a corps of favourites, old and new,
To hold up nature's mirror to your view,
We, lords and ladies of the Sock and Buskin,
Will work like votaries of Mr. Ruskin,
And though denied the joys of digging trenches,
We'll do our very best to fill the benches.

To give our plans a wished-for consummation
Our house has had a thorough renovation,
A new "Act drop" the former one replaces,
Our friends, "the scenes of old," will show new faces,
Thanks to the enterprise of Mr. Hatch,
Our rustic cottage has a bran new thatch,
Our trees and forests glow with brighter tinges,
Our garden gate now swings upon new hinges,
Our foaming cataracts receive new fury,
From the artistic brush of Mr. Drury.
While these improvements our attention share,
Our pieces will receive our greatest care,
Our *artistes* all some claims to fame inherit,
Each being chosen for some special merit;
Nor blame a mother's pride if she refers
To her two sons, who here have won their spurs;
With riper knowledge of their art they seek
Again your kind indulgence to bespeak,
And that good name in Oxford to preserve,
Which we so long have studied to deserve.

As in the past, our constant aim will be
To give our mental feast variety,
To meet the tastes of all will be our wish,
Setting before you many a "dainty dish."
In this we know success will crown our toiling,
If you will only "keep the pot a boiling."
For favours past accept our grateful thanks,
And come again with friends to swell your ranks.
If we your kind approval but secure,
Our cause is won and our success is sure.



TOM SHUTTLE'S WILL.

TOM SHUTTLE, in Lancashire, rented a mill,
By which he made plenty of "siller;"
And "down with the dust" was his motto, but still
He was not known to fame as a miller.

Nor yet was he given to milling like those
Who settle disputes with a thrashing,
Or to milling base coin like the honest man's foes,
Who, like prize-fighters, prosper by smashing.

Tom's wife had a tongue, and to scold or to warn
His ears she was constantly dinning;
With none would she cotton in spinning a yarn,
Though Tom lived by cotton-yarn spinning.

Mrs. Shuttle to Tom never brought peace of mind,
Though brought up a "minder and piecer;"
But his thread of life breaking and stopping his wind,
Tom's "mortal coil" found a releaser.

When making his Will to his lawyer he said,
"For my wife, Mary Jane, make provision;
Let one hundred pounds to her credit be paid
Every year of her widowed condition."

"And if she should marry again, I suppose,"
Said the lawyer, "there'll be a reversion."
"In that case," said Tom, "not a coin must she lose,
So make out a clause in this version:—

"That her income be doubled on wedding again,
'Twould be cruel injustice to halve it,
For he that's united to my Mary Jane,
Poor fellow! I know he'll desarve it."

And though perchance some crime had soiled my
name,
Which I, if poor and mean, could ne'er atone,
A hoard of riches would absolve the blame,
And the false world would all my sins condone.

Oh! would that we could scorn the gilded show
By which our better natures are made blind,
Blunting the sense till we no longer know
The worthy from the worthless of mankind.



"EARTH, SEA, AND SKY."*

I.

O BEAUTIFUL Earth, with its mountain and vale,
Where grandeur and beauty unite,
Its sweet-scented flowers perfuming the gale,
My senses to fill with delight.
With rapture I gaze on thy splendour,
New joys to each day giving birth.
What tribute of praise can I render
Thou beautiful, beautiful Earth!

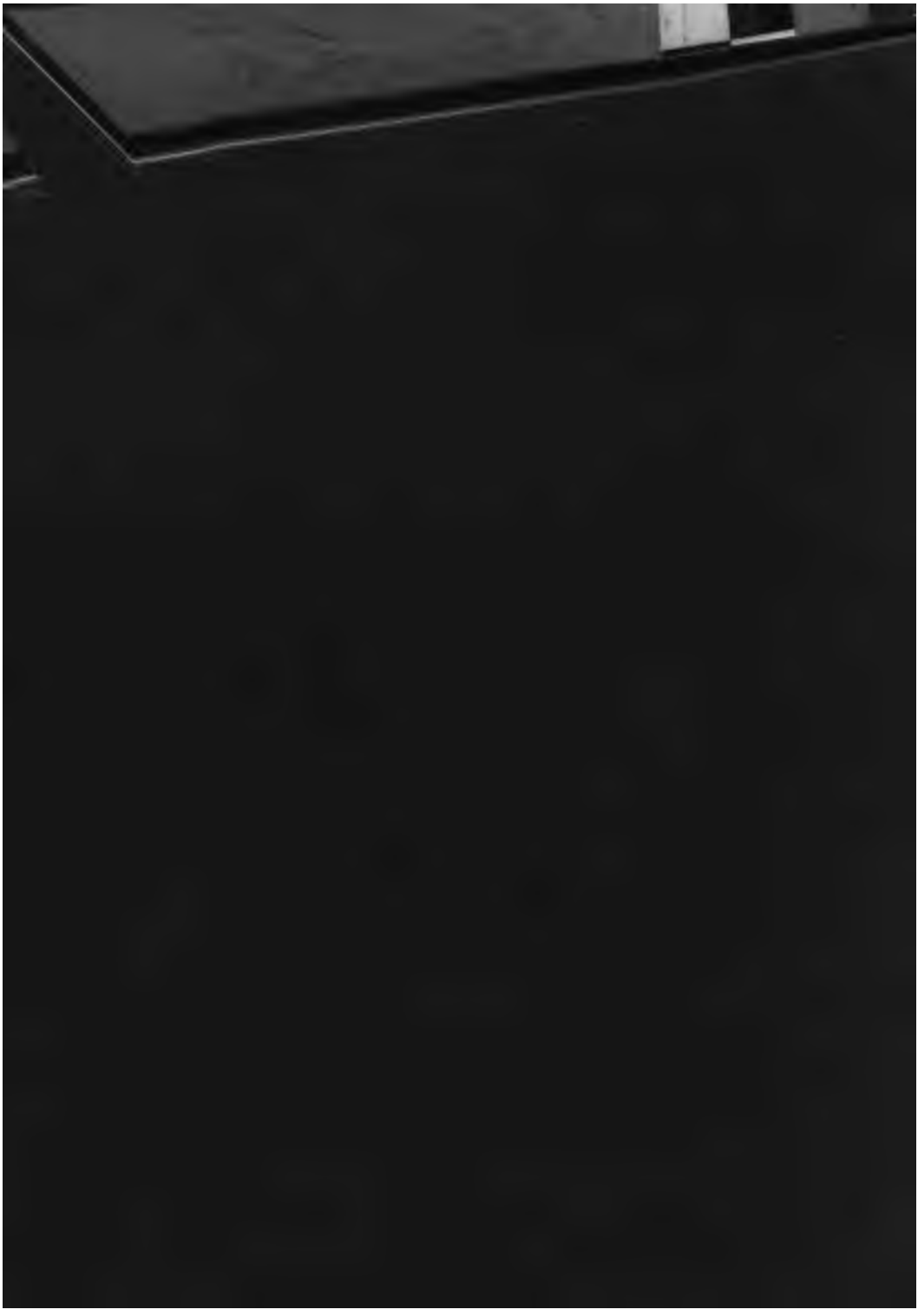
II.

O wonderful Sea, whose mysterious waves,
Sublime in their beauty roll on,
Or lash into foam in the fanciful caves
Of regions far off and unknown.
In storm with the Heavens contending
Now flowing with ripples of glee,
Thy terrors with joys ever blending,
O beautiful, beautiful Sea!

* Set to music by Mr. J. E. Webster, under the title of "Enduring Joys," published by Pillow and Company, Liverpool.

III.

O beautiful Sky, where the stars ever shine,
 Illuming the dark arch of night,
Where, tinging the moon with its lustre divine,
 The sun glows with life-giving light;
Where Heaven's artillery thunders,
 Where calmly the soft zephyrs sigh,
My soul is enthralled with thy wonders,
 O beautiful, beautiful Sky!



As tribute to a transient vision fair,
Of gracious words, of frank and kindly look,
Where talents join in combination rare,
The humble author sends his little book.

May envy's shafts her exaltation miss,
Nor dull her golden sunshine with alloy;
May fate be constant in her dower of bliss,
The future one long dream of wedded joy.

C. D.

